

*West Cemetery  
Amherst, Massachusetts*

## *Preservation Plan*



*Prepared by  
Denig Design Associates, Inc., Landscape Architects*

*with  
CME Associates, Inc., Consulting Engineers  
Beij, Williams & Zito, Inc., Gravestone Conservators  
Cassidy Brothers Forge, Inc., Metals Conservators*



*June 1999*

*This quiet Dust was Gentlemen and Ladies  
And Lads and Girls -  
Was laughter and ability and Sighing  
And Frocks and Curls.*

*This Passive Place a Summer's nimble mansion  
Where Bloom and Bees  
Exists an Oriental Circuit  
Then cease, like these -*

Emily Dickinson, c. 1864

*West Cemetery  
Amherst, Massachusetts*

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*Cover photograph c. 1950, photographer unknown, courtesy of the Jones Library, Special Collections.*

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## INTRODUCTION

West Cemetery lies in the center of downtown Amherst, Massachusetts, sandwiched between North Pleasant and Triangle Streets. Known for its gravesites of prominent Amherst residents Emily Dickinson and William Smith Clark, the burying ground was the town's first, established in 1730. Its four acres extend across what may be some of the only unaltered topography in the Town center, making it a centerpiece of the Town's open space swath, or "Emerald Bracelet."

Changes to the cemetery over time have altered this once pastoral landscape. Bounded today by two commercial developments, a busy thoroughfare, a wooded residential area, and multi-unit residential development, the Cemetery's context no longer supports its historic integrity. Vandals have attacked monuments and markers, pedestrians have worn dirt paths, and the original entrance has become an asphalt-covered exit drive from a parking lot. This important historic landscape — perhaps the town's oldest — has suffered.



*One of the oldest public landscapes in Amherst, West Cemetery lies at the heart of Downtown, hidden behind commercial and residential development.*

The purpose of the Preservation Plan is to guide the assessment, maintenance, rehabilitation, and interpretation of the cemetery, with the goal of restoring its historic integrity, and affirming its importance as one of Amherst's prominent historic sites.

Impetus for the Preservation Plan stemmed from a need identified by Town of Amherst officials, historians, and cemetery enthusiasts to upgrade the cemetery. Because of its location in the heart of downtown, the future of West Cemetery has factored into several planning efforts over the past 25 years. Each recognized the value of the burying ground as an urban open space, important historic site, and potential location for public gatherings and other programs, as follows:

## INTRODUCTION

## Background

- ♦ *Summary of the Report of the Select Committee on Goals for Amherst, 1974.* This committee regarded West Cemetery as an important historic and cultural landmark. By protecting and preserving the burying ground, the Town would encourage activity in downtown Amherst, and affirm its commitment to preserving public open space.
- ♦ *Downtown Action Plan,* completed in 1992. In its discussion of open space and streetscapes, the plan called for improving pedestrian connections to and from West Cemetery, and re-examining the concept of an "urban nature trail" connecting Sweetser Park to West Cemetery. Further, the plan specified improving the Cemetery's visibility, developing it as an interpretive site, and increasing the overall use of the Cemetery landscape.
- ♦ *Amherst Visions,* an interim report to the Comprehensive Planning Committee, June 1998. As a result of a community-based visioning process, the Town identified many "priority actions." Among these was a wish to preserve the Town's historic fabric, including buildings and greenways.
- ♦ *Downtown Pedestrian Plan.* This illustrative plan for downtown Amherst shows several possible pedestrian connections between Boltwood Walk and West Cemetery, and North Pleasant Street and West Cemetery.

Independent of these planning efforts, the Massachusetts Historical Commission named West Cemetery as one of the State's most endangered sites. This designation further confirmed the landscape's importance, and spurred the Town to nominate West Cemetery to the National Register of Historic Places. The preservation plan will complement the nomination, helping to ensure the Cemetery's long-term protection.

## Goal & Objectives

The goal of the Preservation Plan is to guide the long term assessment, maintenance, rehabilitation and interpretation of the landscape at West Cemetery, Amherst, Massachusetts. To meet this goal, the project team fulfilled the following objectives:

- ♦ Established the historical evolution of the Cemetery and its context, from its beginnings to the present;
- ♦ Assessed the condition of the existing landscape features and elements and made recommendations for treatment;
- ♦ Established priorities and a plan for implementing treatment;
- ♦ Established a maintenance program for long term landscape care;
- ♦ Identified sources of public and private support for preservation and interpretation of the Cemetery;
- ♦ Facilitated awareness within the Amherst community as to the importance of West Cemetery, historic cemeteries in general, and the role citizens can play in their preservation; and
- ♦ Recommended methods of interpreting the Cemetery to the public through education programs, signs, and other means.

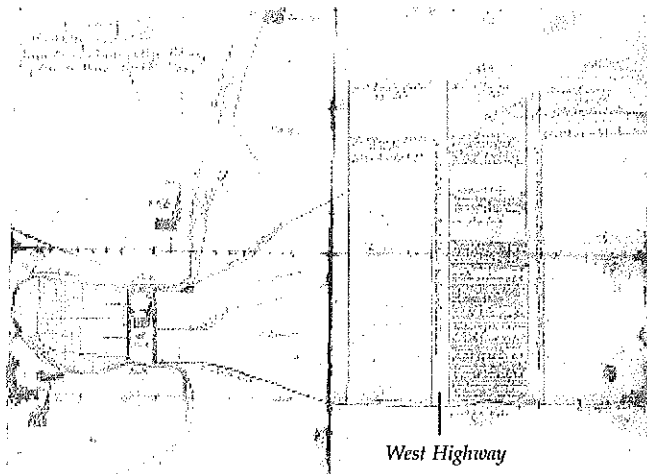
## WEST CEMETERY IN HISTORY

The following chronology outlines the physical development of the West Cemetery landscape from its beginnings as a small, informal burial ground to the present day, as a four-acre cemetery. Resource material came from historic maps, photographs, Town Reports, and other primary sources archived at the Town of Amherst Public Works Department, Special Collections of the Jones Library, and Amherst College Archives. A list of these resources appears in Appendix G of this Plan.

## WEST CEMETERY IN HISTORY

What we know today as downtown Amherst was an eastern settlement of Hadley, with its first residences built in 1728 and 1729. In 1730, the settlers voted to layout a burying ground, and described it as *"fifteen rod joining on Nathaniel Church's lot west and twelve rod east in the Highway, being about an acre & twenty rod of ground, 15 rod in length 12 in breadth."*

1730-1832



*In the 1730's the Cemetery stood somewhere in the "West Highway," as shown above. Map of Hadley, c. 1735, courtesy of the Amherst College Archives, Town of Amherst Collection.*

Early maps of Hadley show the "highway" measuring 40 rods in width. The burying ground, along with what became the Common, stood within this highway. The burying ground predates the first clergyman by eight years (1738), the first completed meetinghouse by 23 (1753), and the establishment of the Town of Amherst by 56 (1786).

Physically, the burying ground probably appeared as follows:

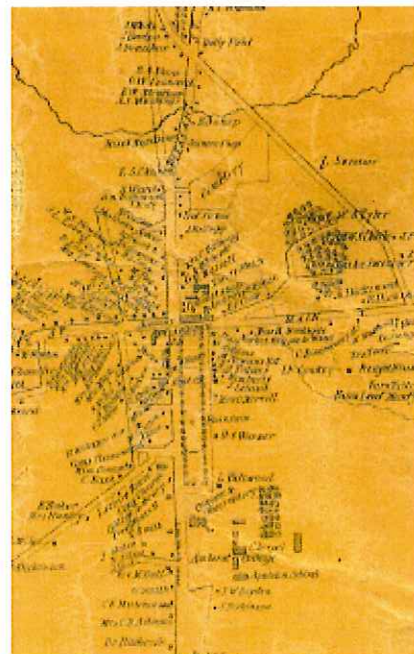
- ♦ It had no roads and probably no paths, resembling a simple open field.
- ♦ Gravesites were not planned or plotted (individual graves were dug as people passed away).
- ♦ Gravesites faced east, with headstones facing west.
- ♦ Many gravesites went unmarked, or may have been marked with impermanent objects (for example, wood).
- ♦ Granite, schist, and sandstone provided gravesites with permanent markers (the oldest marked grave is sandstone). Slate became prevalent around 1790.

- ♦ African Americans were buried together in a separate area.
- ♦ Plant materials were native to western Massachusetts.
- ♦ Groundcovers were probably managed by grazing animals (the lawnmower did not appear until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century), if at all. At times, vegetation around the headstones may have reached eighteen inches.
- ♦ At first, open lands stood at the burying ground perimeter.
- ♦ As the settlement grew, the burying ground stood amongst homes and farmland.
- ♦ Until 1770, the burying ground had no established layout or boundaries. In this year, the selectmen (Hadley) appointed a committee to lay out and fix boundaries.

This one-acre plot served as the Town's only burying ground until 1818, and was known as the "Centre" or "Central" Burying Ground. In 1818, the committee responsible for the burying ground asked the Amherst Selectmen for additional Cemetery land. Their request was approved, but instead of expanding the Centre Burying Ground, the Town secured land for and built fences around two new burying grounds, North and South Cemeteries.

#### 1833-1869

In 1833, the Town appropriated \$770 to purchase additional land and erect the fence. The original acre swelled slightly with the addition of two parcels – one to the east and another to the west. This also included a swath of land connecting the burying ground to North Pleasant Street, establishing access or an entrance from the street. (These parcels were purchased by the Town from David Moody, Albin O. Howe, and Stillman Taylor).



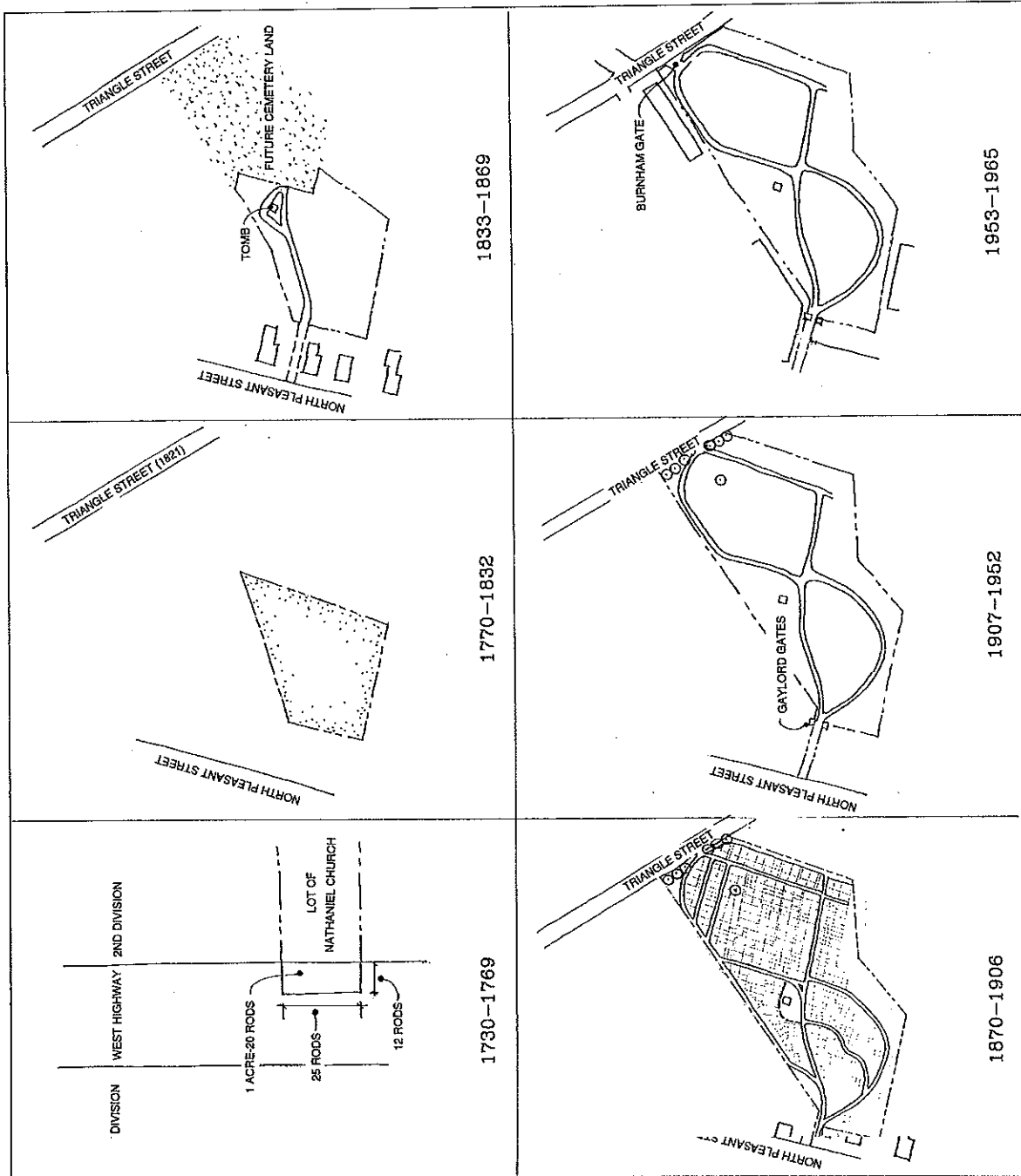
*From the Walling Map of Hampshire County, 1860. The access road leading from North Pleasant Street to the burying ground appears for the first time. Courtesy of the Jones Library, Special Collections.*

# WEST CEMETERY IN HISTORY

- 1730-1769:** First settlers voted to layout a "burying ground, about an acre in size, along the east side of the West Highway. The burying ground, probably resembled a field, with few headstones and unfenced.
- 1770-1832:** Cemetery acquired fixed boundaries, and, until 1818 served as the town's only burying ground. Open lands, and later residences surrounded the cemetery. Markers faced east, and were constructed of slate, schist and sandstone. Plant materials were native to western Massachusetts.
- 1833-1869:** Cemetery grew slightly in acreage, and the town erected a fence. Families began surrounding their plots with fencing and copings and the town erected the tomb. The town purchased the access road leading from North Pleasant Street to the cemetery, and in 1854, laid out the first cemetery road.
- 1870-1906:** Town ordered individuals and families to take deeds and pay for their plots. The cemetery doubled in size and the roadway extended to Triangle Street, creating a second access point. Granite became a popular marker material. Ornamental trees were added.
- 1907-1952:** Gates were added to the North Pleasant Street entrance, and the cemetery received several plantings of ornamental trees. Of note was the Camperdown Elm, placed at the gravesite of William Smith Clark.
- 1953-1965:** Gates were added at Triangle Street, making this the primary entrance to West Cemetery. Disease claimed many of the mature trees.

WEST CEMETERY  
AMHERST, MASSACHUSETTS

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Over the next 40 years, the burying ground landscape began to take on characteristics that would transform it from a graveyard to a Cemetery. In 1844 the Town began producing Annual Reports, and listing burying ground expenditures. These show many alterations and additions:

- ♦ The first road appeared in the Center Burying Ground in 1854 or 1855. It began at North Pleasant Street, ran eastward to the current Gaylord Gates, turned northward and made a loop. It was probably made of dirt (unpaved).
- ♦ Gravesites continued to be unplotted, and dug as individuals passed away.
- ♦ Families began to establish group plots, where relatives could be buried together over time. However, these plots were unmapped, requiring families to mark boundaries with fences and corner posts.
- ♦ Marble became the predominant marker material (between 1820 and 1830).
- ♦ In 1855, the Town erected the "tomb" for "free use of the town."
- ♦ Individuals began ornamenting their plots. In 1858, for example, Edward Dickinson ordered iron fencing for his family plot from H. B. Smith & Co., a manufacturer in Westfield.



*The Dickinson plot (date of photograph unknown). Edward Dickinson arranged for iron fencing to enclose the family plot in 1858. Photo courtesy of the Jones Library, Special Collections.*

- ♦ The burying ground contained a "hearse house."
- ♦ The Town began adding shade and ornamental trees to the Cemetery as early as 1846, and this planting continued for many years.
- ♦ A fence marked the perimeter as early as 1833. The Town maintained this, expending funds almost yearly for its repair, replace-





*North Pleasant Street before 1900, when American Elms lined both sides of the street. Photo courtesy of the Jones Library, Special Collections.*

- ♦ ment, and upkeep.
- ♦ The growing village provided a context for the burying ground. Residences and shade trees lined North Pleasant Street. One such home was 31 North Pleasant Street, the Greek Revival structure where Emily Dickinson lived between 1840 & 1855 (now Ren's Mobil). The burying ground stood in the back yards of these homes, separated only by a fence.



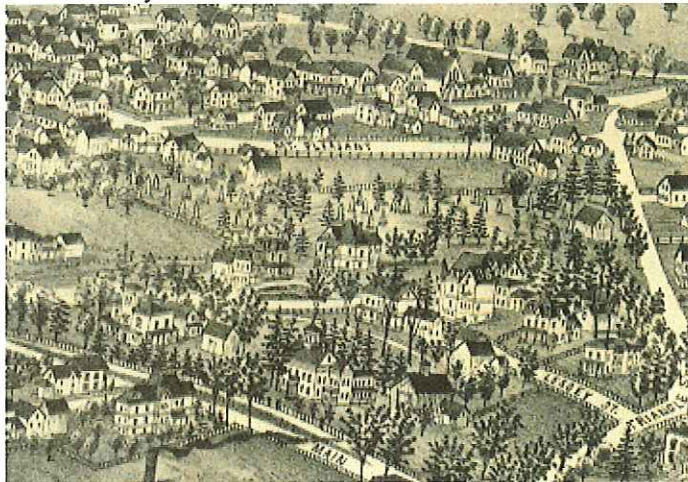
*The Bigalow House at 31 North Pleasant Street. The back of the house overlooked West Cemetery. Photo courtesy of the Jones Library, Special Collections.*

## 1870-1906

1870 marks the year the Center Burying Ground became an official "Cemetery." The Town Selectmen ordered individuals and families owning plots in the burying ground to "take deeds" and pay for their plots. The Town also acquired additional lands in this year to the north,

nearly doubling the size. With this enlargement came the building of 57 rods of roadway and laying of 36 rods of drain tile 6 feet below the surface. The roadway made accessible 56 new burial lots, and the tile drained area for over 100. Town Reports referred to the Center Burying Ground now as "West Cemetery." The landscape appeared as follows:

- ♦ Roadway now extended through roughly four acres, and included a curvilinear roadway in the oldest section (south) and a grid layout in the newer, northern section. The grid allowed for ease in plotting gravesites, which were now deeded to and paid for by their owners. Workers brought in gravel to pave the roadways.
- ♦ A second access point to the Cemetery developed at Triangle Street, slightly to the east of the present day entrance.
- ♦ Gravesites began to appear largely in group or family plots, surrounded by fencings, copings, or bollards.
- ♦ Large obelisks often marked family plots, with small individual stones marking individual graves within these plots.
- ♦ Granite gradually became the predominant material for markers.
- ♦ In 1871 the "hearse and tool house" was removed to the "rear" of the Cemetery.



*A bird's eye view of the Town of Amherst in 1886. A picket fence surrounded West Cemetery. Sketch published by L. R. Burleigh, Troy, NY, and reprinted in 1975 by the Amherst Record. Courtesy of the Jones Library, Special Collections.*

- ♦ A 5'-high painted picket fence and plain board fence rimmed the entire Cemetery. The picket fence lined the highway (Triangle Street), while plain board edged the remainder.
- ♦ West Cemetery appeared to be well tended and a source of pride for citizens of Amherst. The residential, commercial, and educational communities grew up around the Cemetery, but did not impose upon its edges.

1907 marks the first year of reporting in the Town's Annual Report by the "Cemetery Commissioners." They noted that the "Village Cemetery" had been neglected in recent years, and was filled, with no income from sale of lots. Interested citizens had donated funds for Cemetery upkeep, however, and reclamation had begun. By 1908, the Cemetery seemed significantly improved. The effort to donate money for Cemetery upkeep spurred a perpetual care fund for maintaining the Cemetery landscape. Several changes occurred:

- ♦ In 1908, two "handsome granite gate posts" were erected at the North Pleasant Street entrance, a gift of Mrs. Flavel Gaylord.
- ♦ Burials continued to follow the pattern of the latter half of the 19th century, with family members placed together in pre-sold plots.
- ♦ The Cemetery Commissioners recommended that "Pelham Water" be introduced to displace the old pump, which was considered unsanitary.
- ♦ Several diseases infiltrated trees in the Town including scale, Elm leaf beetle, and another that effected young maples. Planting of resistant species may have occurred in the Cemetery.



*The Camperdown Elm at the gravesite of William Smith Clark (date unknown). Courtesy of the Jones Library, Special Collections.*

- ♦ A Camperdown Elm was planted at the gravesite of Dr. William Smith Clark, near the Triangle Street entrance. This tree took on the remarkable shape of an umbrella.
- ♦ Before 1908, an eclectic mix of fences trimmed the Cemetery, including high board fence, wire fence, and picket fence. In 1908 these were considered "unsightly" and removed.

## 1953-1965

After many years of few changes in its landscape, West Cemetery received a major enhancement. In 1954 the Town built the "Burnham Memorial Gateway" with a generous donation from Miss Alice C. Burnham. Three local individuals formed a special committee to create designs and plans for the gate site – Walter Hatch, a retired landscape architect, Orton Clark, a retired professor of botany at the University of Massachusetts, and Raymond Otto, a professor of landscape architecture at the University of Massachusetts. Robert W. Remy, architect of Northampton, designed the gate.

This addition would shift the main entrance to the Cemetery to Triangle Street, obscuring the historic North Pleasant Street entrance. Several alterations occurred with the building of the gate:

- ♦ The entrance from Triangle Street shifted to the west, and the land in this area was regraded for the new entry road.
- ♦ The Town removed the fencing along Triangle Street, to allow for the new wall.
- ♦ To prepare for gate construction, the Town removed several trees. The November 20, 1953 Daily Hampshire Gazette reported, "[t]he last of four large old Elm trees on this land fell to the ground late yesterday afternoon."
- ♦ The new gate and wall, constructed of Chelmsford granite, established a permanent edge to the Cemetery's northern boundary.
- ♦ Mature vegetation lined each edge of the Cemetery, except at the Gaylord Gate and new Burnham Gateway and wall.
- ♦ Burials continued, despite a sense in the community that the Cemetery had reached capacity. Markers appeared more homogenous in size, shape and material – largely 30 inches high, rectangular, and made of granite.

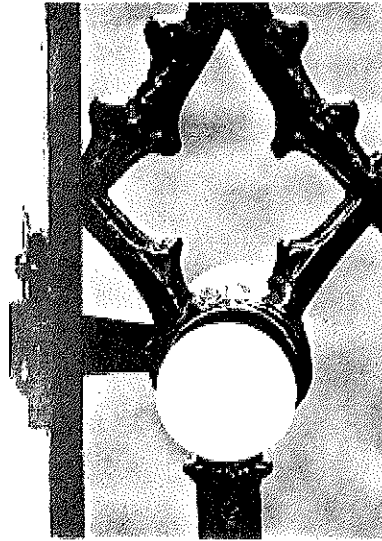
## 1966-1999

While still active for burials, West Cemetery entered a period of gradual degradation in the last half of this century. The Town cared for the landscape by mowing and removing diseased and dead trees, but the growing population and surrounding commercial development lead to vandalism of many historic features. Today, the following conditions appear.

- ♦ Materials for roadways and paths range from bituminous asphalt, to gravel, to dirt and turf. Poor drainage afflicts the unpaved roads in the oldest section, creating seasonal ponding and ruts.
- ♦ Many of the ornamental features, largely from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, have been vandalized or removed. In 1968, the Daily Hampshire Gazette reported that the Dickinson plot was the only ornamental iron fenced area remaining in the Cemetery.
- ♦ The porcelain knob on the Dickinson plot gate disappeared in 1973.
- ♦ Sometime shortly after the Burnham Gateway dedication, the Camperdown Elm at the gravesite of William Smith Clark was removed, and replaced by a Sargeant Cherry (*Prunus sargeantii*).
- ♦ Turf covers the entire Cemetery floor, requiring regular mowing in spring, summer and fall.



- Despite the Cemetery's age and the extent of ornamental plantings done in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, few significant or unusual species stand. Most trees are common, with the exception of a Japanese Maple (*Acer palmatum*), Ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba*), and Katsura (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum*).
- A mix of materials, including mature vegetation, an evergreen hedge, chain link fence, and the Burnham Gateway wall, rim the Cemetery. On the south side, a dilapidated chicken wire fence is the only separation between the Cemetery and the driveway to an apartment building.



*The porcelain knob of the Dickinson family plot gate. Printed in the Amherst Record, June 6, 1973. Its loss was typical of the degradation at West Cemetery.*

*'Where is this?'*

Perhaps the most remarkable change in the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has been the Cemetery context. Beginning in the 1960's, large-scale commercial and residential development grew around the west and south, closely abutting Cemetery land. The historic entrance from North Pleasant Street – one of the oldest access roads in the town – is now an exit drive for a parking lot. With the building of the Amherst Regional High School, West Cemetery became a short route to downtown. Lack of a significant buffer at the perimeter detracts from the Cemetery's privacy and intimacy.

#### Period of Significance

The West Cemetery landscape reflects the aesthetic of not one, but many individuals, working over the course of nearly 275 years. This collection of styles — from the simple colonial, to the ornate Victorian, to the efficient modern — is what defines the Cemetery's character. Because of this, the significance of the landscape lies in not one, but many periods in history, as outlined above. Preserving the Cemetery, therefore, means representing each period while, at the same time, establishing a feeling of cohesiveness and sense of place. The following "Landscape Assessment" and "Recommendations" aim to accomplish this.



## EXISTING CONDITIONS

Since 1965, the West Cemetery landscape has declined. Vandals have attacked monuments, and trespassers have created wear paths. While some historical features – monuments, markers, ironwork, trees – remain, much of the historic fabric has eroded. In addition, commercial, institutional and residential buildings have grown up around the edges, detracting from the once pastoral quality of the old burying ground.

**WEST CEMETERY**  
TOWN OF AMHERST  
AMHERST, MASSACHUSETTS

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## **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT**

What follows is an assessment of the historic landscape at West Cemetery. Its purpose is to identify the remaining historical elements and features (inventory), establish their condition (analysis), and make preliminary recommendations for their treatment (evaluation). Together with the historic landscape chronology, the assessment provides a foundation for the Preservation Plan.

## HISTORIC LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

The West Cemetery landscape reflects a layering of history, from the earliest burials in the 1730's, to modern circulation patterns of the 1990's. In order to clarify these layers, we studied the many elements and features in groups, including context, views, slopes, vegetation, entrances, roads and paths, and constructed elements – copings, monuments, markers, ironwork, and the Town Tomb. We visited the Cemetery with a detailed topographic survey in hand, and made the following observations.

### Inventory & Analysis

Historical records show that the land surrounding the Cemetery has changed significantly over the years, and particularly within the last thirty. Two-story commercial developments and asphalt parking areas cover what was once open pastureland. These “unsupportive” adjacent uses include:

### Context

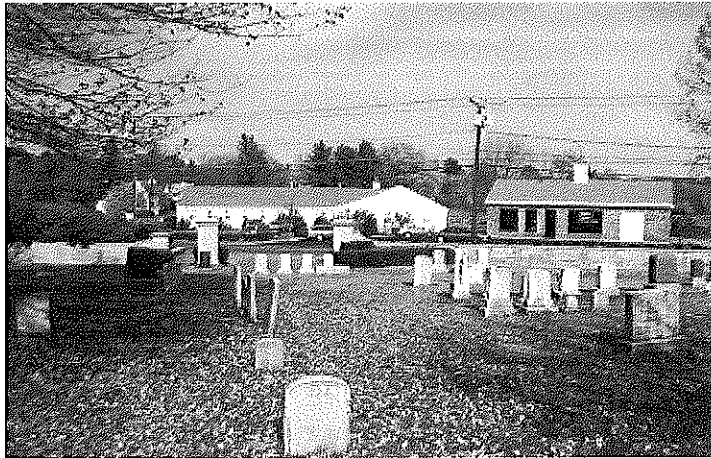
- ♦ The northern edge, where the Carriage Shops and DH Jones Realty Office come within twenty feet of the Cemetery edge. A row of hemlocks provides a small buffer.



*The northern edge. The Carriage Shops spill over into the Cemetery landscape.*

- ♦ Triangle Street, along the northeastern edge, where the road pavement comes within twenty feet of the Burnham Gate wall. Lack of tall vegetation along the wall results in a hard edge.
- ♦ The southern edge, where a two-story apartment complex towers over the Cemetery's oldest section. This property boundary lacks a buffer of any type. The apartment building appears to share Cemetery land.





*The Triangle Street edge. Lack of tall trees allows the abutting commercial buildings to encroach on the Cemetery landscape.*

- ♦ Along the original road into the Cemetery, off North Pleasant Street. Here, one- and two-story commercial buildings respectively line the south and north sides, detracting from the dignity of this historic Cemetery entrance.

The Cemetery's eastern edge partially supports the Cemetery character, as follows:

- ♦ A trimmed hemlock separates a single-family residential neighborhood from the Cemetery. The softness of the vegetation provides a modest buffer, but its low, 5' height allows views into neighbors' backyards.

Most supportive of the Cemetery is the mature pine buffer along the southeastern edge. These trees enclose the Cemetery and create an intimate feeling, similar to that found in 19<sup>th</sup> century drawings and photographs.

## Views

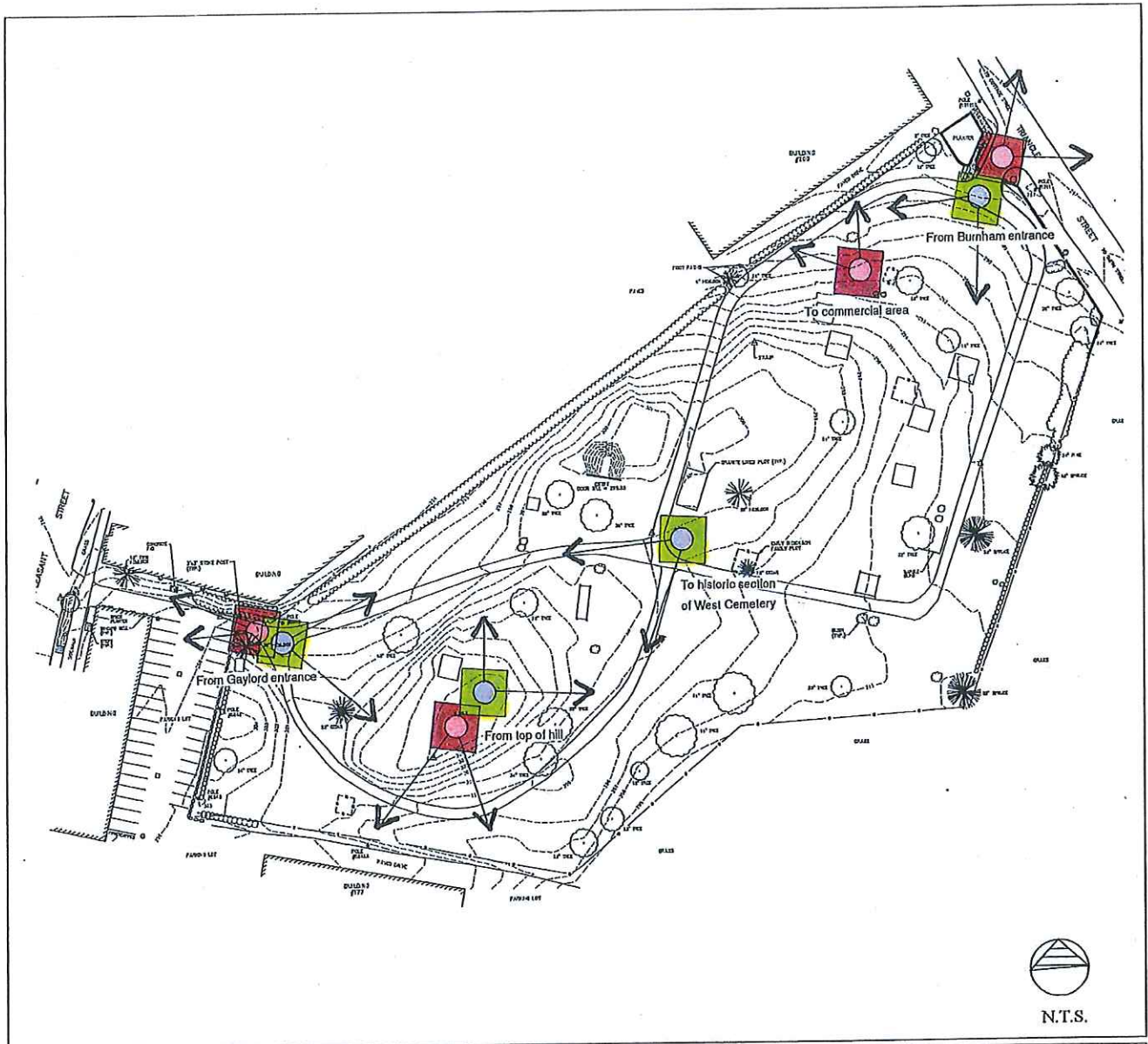
Views in and around West Cemetery both support and detract from the historical integrity. In general, internal views (views of the Cemetery from within the Cemetery) are pleasing, as follows:

- ♦ From the Burnham Gate southward across the newer section of the Cemetery;
- ♦ From the Dickinson plot southward across the older section;
- ♦ From the Cemetery high point northeastward over the older section and across the newer one; and
- ♦ From just inside the Gaylord Gates eastward across the older section.

Less pleasing views incorporate the Cemetery's unsupportive adjacent uses, as follows:

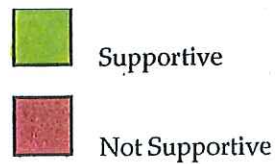
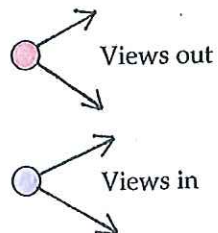
- ♦ From the Burnham Gate eastward, across Triangle Street to the strip development;





# HISTORIC LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

## VIEWS:



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TOWN OF AMHERST  
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*The Gaylord Gates looking westward down the historic access road.*

- ♦ From the Clark gravesite westward to the DH Jones Realty office;
- ♦ From the Cemetery high point southward to the two-story apartment complex; and
- ♦ From the Gaylord Gates westward down the historic access road.

Topography across West Cemetery ranges from quite level (less than 5%) to fairly steep (over 8.33%). In general, the gentlest slopes lie along the central and eastern sections, and along nearly all of the two loop roads. These provide easy access for both disabled and non-disabled persons to most parts of the Cemetery, and in particular to the most frequented spot, the Dickinson plot.

### *Slopes*



*Topography in the oldest section forms a small hill, sheltering the Cemetery from adjacent uses.*

More rolling land covers the southwest section (the oldest section), the western edge, and the northern half of the newest section. These slopes impede access for people with disabilities, and, in particular make the heart of the oldest section difficult to reach. However, they serve a useful function along the southern and western edges, creating a slight barrier between the Cemetery and adjacent uses.



Overall, the small "hills" contrast with the flatter "valleys," giving the Cemetery landscape variety, creating intimate areas, and establishing spots for enjoying long views.

### **Vegetation**

Trees and other plant materials in the Cemetery range in condition as follows:

- ♦ **Good** (healthy, aesthetically pleasing and/or serving an important function). These include the several mature species within the Cemetery, as well as most of the hedges along the Cemetery's edges.



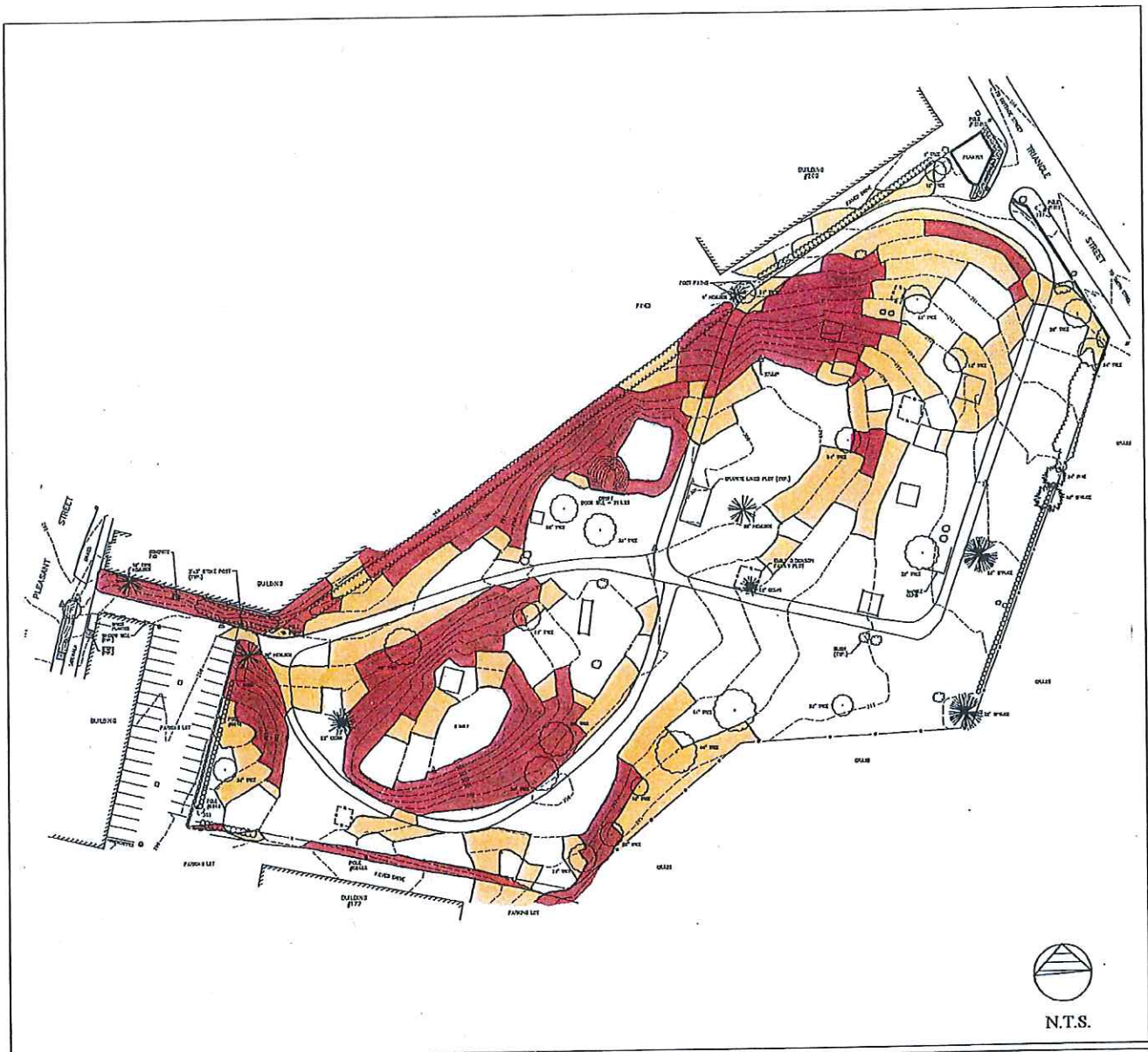
*The Sargeant Cherry (Prunus sargentii) at the gravesite of William Smith Clark. Similar to many of the trees, the specimen stands in good condition.*

- ♦ **Fair** (showing signs of disease and/or not contributing to the Cemetery's aesthetic quality). These include several old trees and shrubs within the Cemetery, including Dogwoods and Hydrangeas that are near the end of their lives. Scrubby growth north of the Gaylord Gates (along the historic entry drive) and along the southwestern corner complete this group.
- ♦ **Poor** (sickly, dying, and should be removed). Only one tree – a Cherry in the newer section – falls into this group.

In general, nearly all of the trees and other plants have been well-maintained and most are quite mature. The taller trees contribute to a sense of intimacy, and with the rolling topography, create variety within the Cemetery. Some hold greater significance, because of their size and/or species. These include a 28" Japanese Maple, 20" Ginkgo, and 44" Katsura.

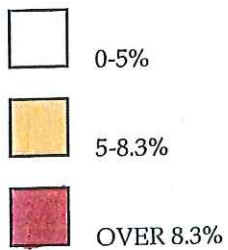
### **Entrances, Roads & Paths**

Visitors arrive at West Cemetery in one of two entrances, the 1907 Gaylord Gates off North Pleasant Street, or the 1955 Burnham Gate, off Triangle Street. While the access road to the Gaylord dates to 1833, it serves today as an exit driveway for the abutting parking area. This obscures the entrance and, at the same time, detracts from the historical



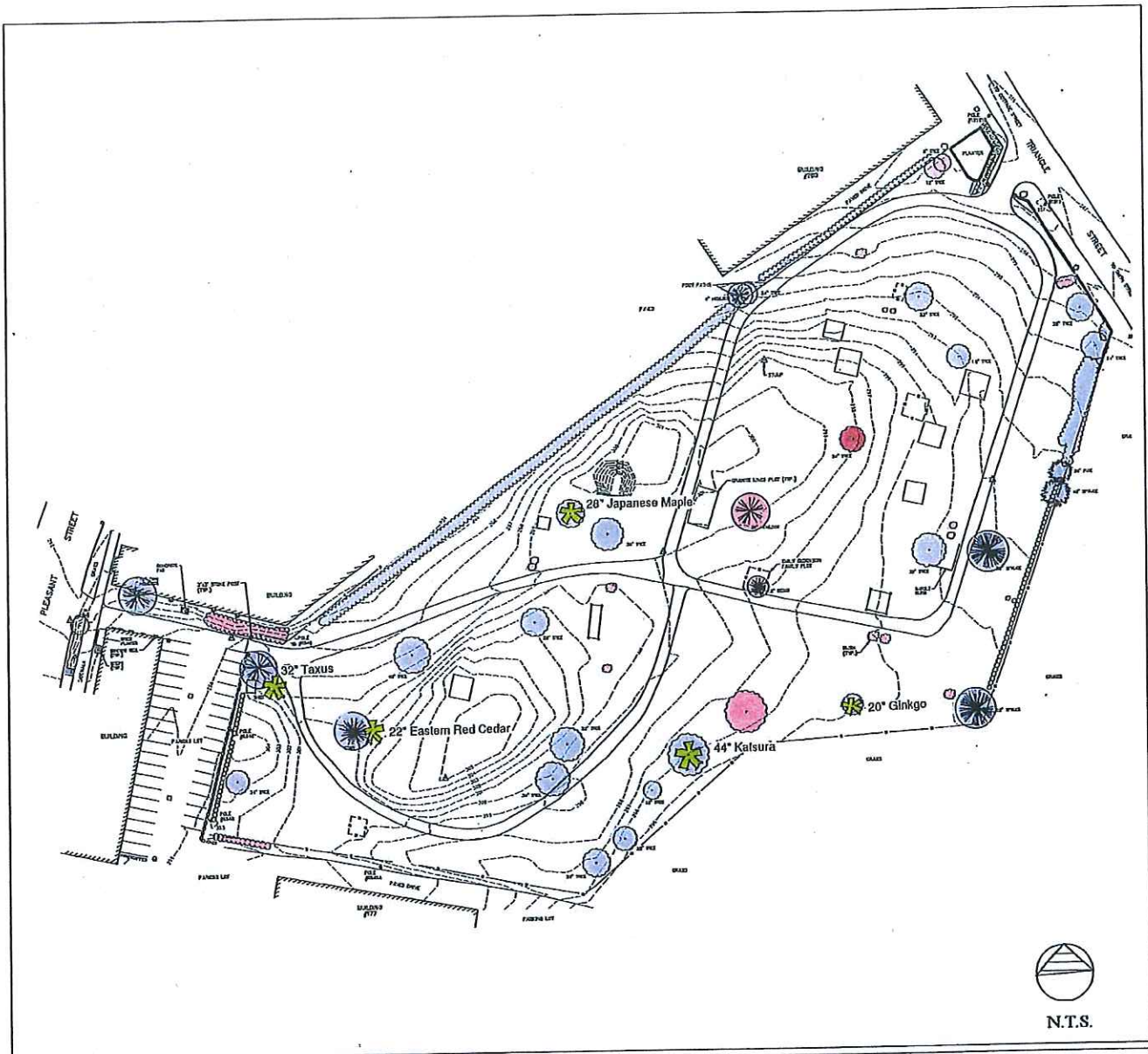
## HISTORIC LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

### SLOPES:



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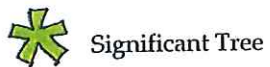
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## HISTORIC LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

### VEGETATION:

Condition:



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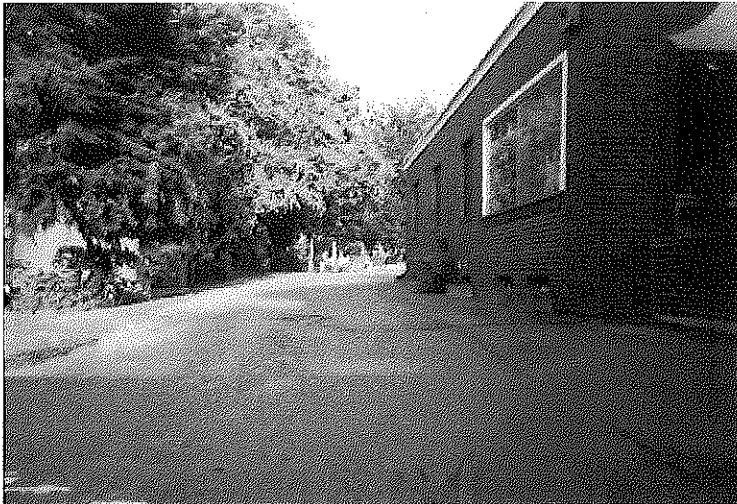
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integrity of this important historic drive. A chain across the Gaylord prevents vehicles from entering, making the gateway accessible only to pedestrians. The poor condition of the gateposts further detracts from this historic entrance.



*The Gaylord entrance from north Pleasant Street. The historic access drive serves today as an exit driveway for a parking area.*

In contrast, the Burnham offers a wide driveway, paved with bituminous concrete, and flanked by the well-cared-for stone gateposts. Vehicles can enter from Triangle Street, easily reach all sections of the Cemetery, and return to the Burnham to exit. The Burnham's proximity to the busy Triangle Street, however, makes it difficult to enter and exit, especially for those turning in from and out into the Street's northbound lane.



*The dirt and turf roadway in the 1730 section. The surface material complements the historic character.*

Once in the Cemetery, visitors experience a variety of paving materials on road surfaces. In the newer section, bituminous concrete covers the roadway surface. While an efficient material for vehicles, it is least compatible with the section's 19<sup>th</sup> century character. Gravel and dirt (mixed with turf) cover the older section's roads. Both materials complement the historical integrity of this section, with the dirt/turf road providing the greatest historical support.

Because West Cemetery is located in the center of Amherst, in and amongst commercial, residential and institutional development, pedestrians use the Cemetery entrances, roads and paths far more frequently than do vehicles. Much like a public park, the Cemetery serves as a passageway for high school students walking to downtown, and for others walking between the Carriage Shops area and residential areas (on the Cemetery's eastern edge). Several makeshift entrances and "wear paths" have resulted, creating eroded and degraded conditions along the Cemetery's western and southern edges.

### *Copings*

Approximately fourteen burial areas are surrounded either by stone coping, or stone with iron fencing. Each defines a family plot and was installed by the family to be part of the plot. The designs are each somewhat different, but also similar when it comes to construction technique.

The majority of the coping consists of cut granite blocks embedded in the soil (one site contains marble blocks). The depth of embedment cannot be determined without excavating the soil, but we surmise that most of the coping is set less than 6" into the soil.



*A typical granite coping, surrounding a family plot. The stones have shifted, due to an inadequate base and freeze-thaw cycles.*

The connection of the individual blocks can be categorized into two distinct types. Most are dry laid with each block butted against the next without any connection. Several plots have coping that is connected with pins (most likely brass) combined with lead sheet pointing. There are several plots that have or did have iron pipe or picket fencing placed between granite posts.

Most of the granite coping is in very good physical condition. There is minor loss of stone surface due to weathering, but the granite has held up well. The marble coping is in fair condition. Weathering has removed some of the detail on the surface of the stone.

The problem with the coping is shifting of the stones. Several of the plots are in almost new condition, but others have experienced significant shifting, settling, and heaving. Shifting happens when the stones are not properly embedded into the soil. The stones are very susceptible to shifting when the ground freezes and heaves. The shifting of the coping is very similar to the shifting of gravestones over time. There are several taller curbs that are acting as mini-retaining walls. These stones have shifted outward due to the soil pressure behind.

The inventory and analysis of monuments and markers includes 148 stones – a representative sample of the entire Cemetery holdings. Marble dominates as the material used for markers and most in need of repair (77% of the inventory), with slate (12%), granite (7%), and brownstone (4%) representing a smaller share of the stones and requiring fewer repairs.

#### *Monuments & Markers*



*West Cemetery's oldest stone, constructed of brownstone. Many of the brownstone markers will require some type of treatment.*

The most extensive damage appears on approximately 35% of the inventory, largely in the oldest section of the Cemetery. Brownstone, marble, and slate stones show damage, as follows:

- ♦ Three brownstone monuments (the Wheelock obelisk, Nelson monument, and Williams obelisk), have either completely fallen over decayed and parted, and/or are leaning, and two others contain extensive damage.
- ♦ Several marble tablets, have snapped and are either off their bases or without bases altogether; and
- ♦ Several slate tablets, have snapped and, in some instances, are in pieces.

Roughly half (47%) contain moderate damage, consisting largely of snapped marble tablets, and granite markers which have moved off their bases. The remaining 18% have been minimally damaged – mostly granite and marble markers that have become unpinned.

Overall, West Cemetery's monuments and markers stand in good condition, with modest damage. None of the markers contains damage beyond repair. Refer to Appendix A of this Plan for the complete inventory of monuments and markers.

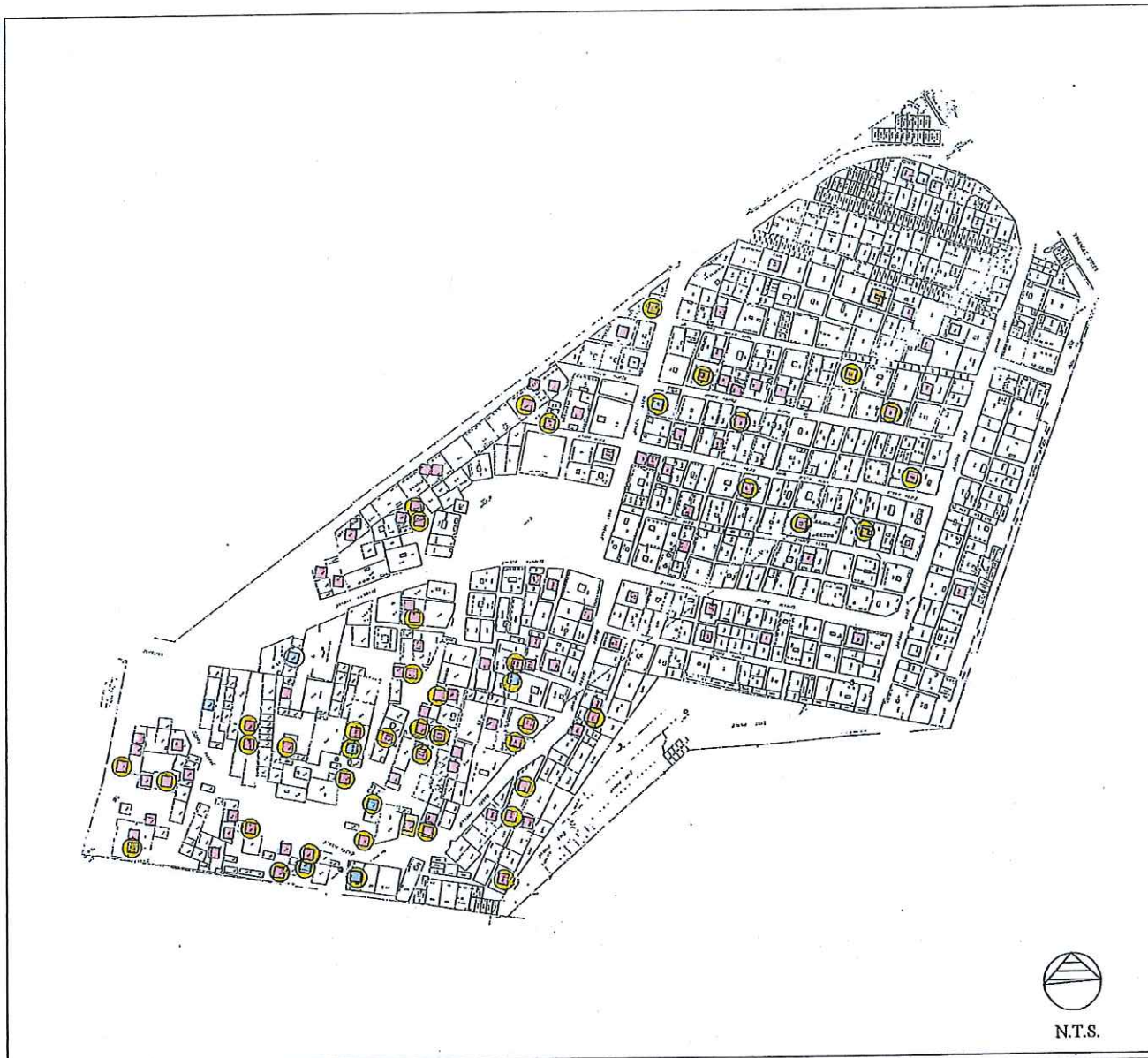
### *Metalwork*

While records indicate that many of the plots at West Cemetery may have included displays of metalwork, few remain. Extant are four forms of metalwork, as follow:

- ♦ **Dickinson Family Plot Fence.** Structurally the cast iron fence around the Dickinson family plot is in good condition. With the exception of the gate, all of the original parts are present and in reasonably good shape. Often a fence of this age and construction has broken and missing pieces. The gate appears to be newer than the existing cast iron fence. The bar sizes and several parts do not match those in the original fence and they are arc-welded together.



*The Dickinson Family plot fence placed in 1858 by Emily Dickinson's father, Edward Dickinson, stands in good condition.*



## HISTORIC LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

### MONUMENTS & MARKERS:

#### Materials:



Brownstone



Granite



Marble



Schist



Slate

#### Condition:



Severe

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The finish of the fence is presently the greatest area of concern. Most of the fence is rusting rapidly from lack of maintenance and the rate of corrosion is accelerating rapidly. If not restored and repainted soon, the fence will begin to deteriorate structurally as well.

- ♦ **Cutler Plot Fencing.** The existing cast iron fence around the Cutler plot is in a serious state of disrepair. Many of the panels along two sides have either fallen down or are missing altogether. Due to the fact that the fence is severely corroded, none of the original painted finish is remaining. This will most likely eliminate the need for lead abatement.



*Fencing around the Cutler plot is in a serious state of disrepair.*

- ♦ **Town Tomb Door.** The steel door at the Town Tomb is severely corroded and due to the existence of modern arc-welds, may not be of significant historic interest. The locking mechanism is a poorly-designed component constructed of modern materials.
- ♦ **Granite Post and Pipe Rails.** Throughout the Cemetery, several simple rails systems surround various plots, many of which need repair. Typically, they consist of short granite posts, which have a steel pipe set horizontally between them in a classic "post and rail" style. Several locations have missing pipes, which need to be replaced. Several other locations have a large decorative cast iron collar, which is broken or missing.

The Town Tomb, constructed in 1851, measures 8' wide by 8' high by 16' long on the inside. Its individual components are as follows:

- ♦ **Base Structure.** This consists of a mortared stone earth retaining structure. The thickness of the walls is approximately 2 feet, as confirmed by the dislodged fascia stone in the right front of the Tomb.

*Town Tomb*





*The Town Tomb, erected in 1855.*

The joints in the walls are mortared on the inside face (also confirmed by the dislodged fascia), with some mortar applied between the stones. Mortar also covers the inside face of the base. Only one crack was found in the entire structure, located to the left of the entrance door on the side wall. The crack is approximately 0.060 inches wide at the top, and 0 inches wide at the bottom. There is some condensation and signs of minor leakage through all the walls.

- ♦ **Ceiling Structure.** The ceiling consists of flat stones that span the entire width of the tomb. The joints between the stones are mortared. The ceiling is in excellent condition.
- ♦ **Front Wall.** This wall is constructed differently than the other walls, reflecting a method that closely resembles an above-ground building. The wall rests on a stone footing. The wall section above grade consists of two courses of brick on the inside face, and a single course veneer of cut granite that is approximately 6 inches thick. The brick is constructed with lime-based mortar, and the granite appears to only be pinned together without mortar in the joints.

Despite a minor loss of mortar, the brick wall is in good condition, without signs of significant moving or cracking. However, the cut stone veneer on the front wall is showing signs of structural distress. Several of the panels have moved 2 to 4 inches away from the stone foundation walls behind. This has opened up many of the joints, allowing dirt and moisture to migrate into the voids. Several of the panels are approaching the point of instability at this time.

- ♦ **Floor.** The floor appears to be constructed of mortar or concrete. The original floor may have been dirt. The existing floor is very thin and hollow when sounded with a hammer. While in poor condition, the floor should not be considered a structural problem.

The overall structural integrity of the underlying tomb foundation and ceiling is excellent. There is very little sign of movement and cracking. The only crack that was found was most likely caused by settlement or

frost-heaving of the front wall. There is some moisture intrusion into the Tomb, but there is no need to correct this problem unless the structure is to be used for storage in the future.

The Tomb's only major structural problem lies with the cut granite fascia stones on the front wall. The most likely cause of their movement is either settlement or frost-heaving of the foundation. This movement is compounded when the joints open up. The intrusion of dirt and water can act as a wedge during winter freeze cycles. The expansion of the wet soil can exert tremendous force on the stones. When the frozen soil melts, more soil falls into the voids, exacerbating the problem.

Approximately 90% of the Cemetery lies in darkness at night, with just two pole lights, provided by the Town, at the Gaylord Gates and southwest corner of the DH Jones Realty building. Each pole projects a circle of light roughly 150 feet in diameter. Other pole lighting stands along Triangle Street and over the parking lots adjacent to the southern and eastern edges. These project approximately a 50' diameter circle of light away from the Cemetery.

### *Lighting*

Lack of lighting, particularly in the eastern low-lying areas, makes the Cemetery a dark place, and attracts trespassers. However, the absence of light poles placed along walkways and in dark corners supports the landscape's historical integrity. Records and photographs suggest that only natural light has illuminated West Cemetery throughout history.

West Cemetery contains no interpretive signs and does not post its regulations. One small marker, embedded in the Burnham Gate, announces the Cemetery entrance and founding date. The Gaylord Gate, the Cemetery's original entrance, does not contain a "West Cemetery" sign. Visitors approaching the Burnham Gate by car along Triangle Street receive no advance warning of the Cemetery entrance. Similarly, lack of signs alerting drivers and walkers along North Pleasant Street, obscures the Gaylord entrance.

### *Signs*

Overall, West Cemetery is poorly signed. Visitors to the Emily Dickinson gravesite must meander along paths and amongst family plots. A worn spot near the poet's headstone catches visitors' attention, leading them to the grave. Gravesites of other important Amherst citizens are equally difficult to find.

Beginning as early as the 1960's the incidence of vandalism at West Cemetery began to rise. Since September of 1990, the Amherst Police Department has recorded only fourteen violations, including painted gravestones, kicked gates, overturned stones, noisiness, and found property. However, the Amherst Department of Public Works, Tree Division has observed many more undocumented incidences including bar-goers sleeping over night, and vandals strewing broken glass, littering, and leaving illegal substance paraphernalia. In addition to creating the wear paths, high school students tend to hop the Burnham wall, trampling the plant materials. Police officers on bicycles patrol the

### *Vandalism*



Cemetery four to five times between 4:00 p.m. until 12:00 a.m., and shoo away any trespassers.

Research on vandalism at five other cemeteries in similar settings (in college or preparatory school towns, located downtown) revealed similar problems, as summarized the table in Appendix D. At each Cemetery, caretakers agreed that the solutions to controlling damage include:

- ♦ Educating local high school and college students as to the value and importance of the Cemetery. This has been effective at the Dartmouth Cemetery, Hanover, New Hampshire, where Dartmouth College students interact with the Cemetery as part of their coursework in their freshman year. The little damage that does occur has been attributed to vandals from outside the community.
- ♦ Placing signs at (1) the approaches to the Cemetery, (2) the entrances to the Cemetery, and (3) within the Cemetery, for interpretive, regulatory and directional purposes. None of the five cemeteries contains an aggressive sign program, and each caretaker attributed vandalism to this.
- ♦ Upgrading Cemetery security, by closing the Cemetery at dusk, and fining individuals found trespassing at night. This is particularly effective at Concord's Main Street Burying Ground, where the town closes gates at night, and police patrol the perimeter.
- ♦ Keeping the Cemetery neat and clean. All caretakers agreed that a well-maintained appearance deters vandals. As landscape degradation increases, so does vandalism.
- ♦ Keeping the Cemetery visible. At the Bridge Street Cemetery (Northampton), neighborhood residents "own" the grounds by watching over them and reporting intruders to the police.

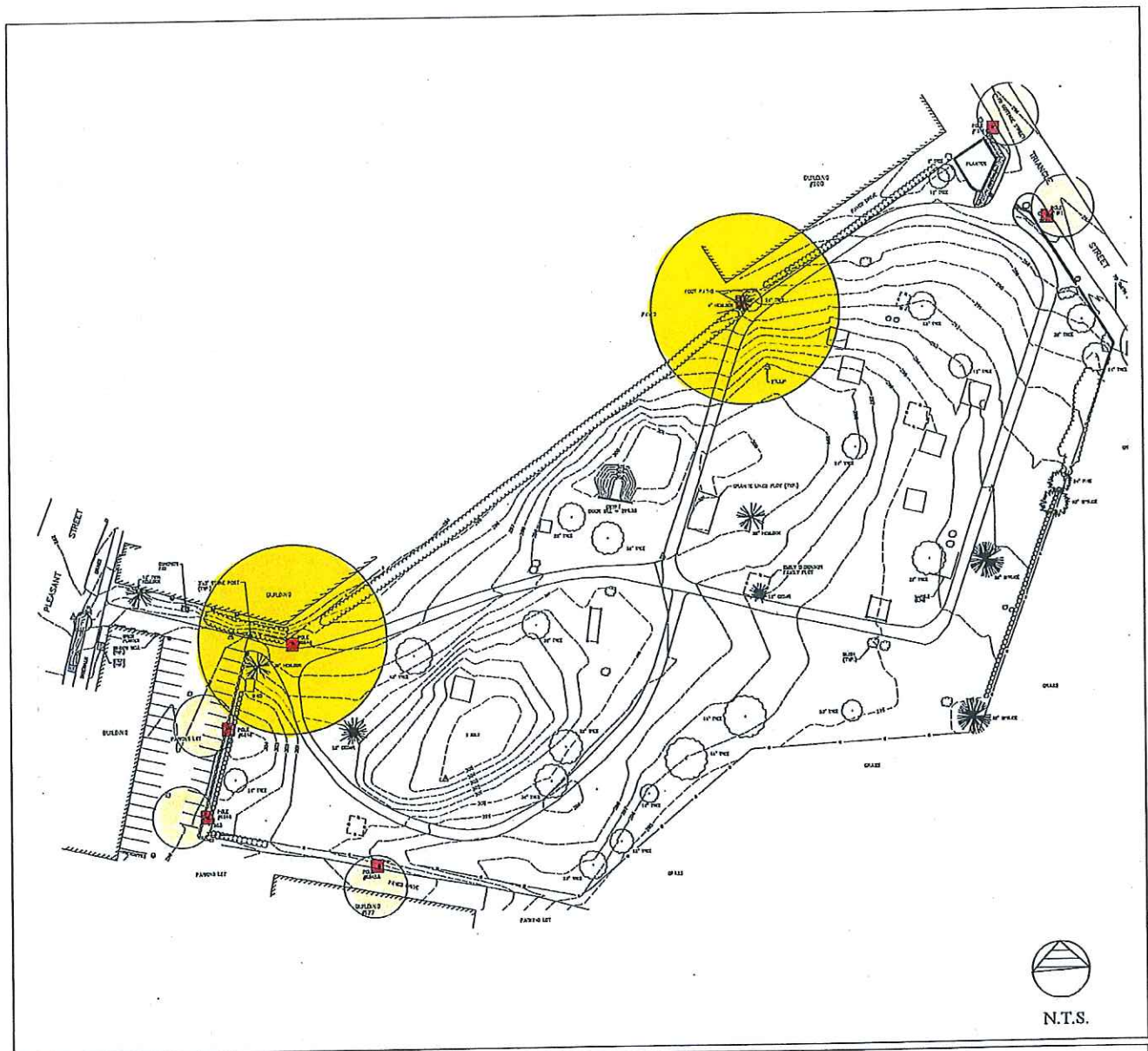
#### **Evaluation**

Based on the foregoing historic landscape chronology, inventory and analysis, we have compiled the following preliminary recommendations for preservation treatment. They provide a point of beginning for the final Preservation Plan, which will study treatment options in greater detail, explore their costs, and place them in order of priority.

#### ***Areas for Preservation/ Stabilization***

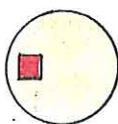
The following features, elements, and areas should be retained in their existing form, with their integrity and materials sustained:

- ♦ Mature pine buffer on the southeastern edge;
- ♦ Existing topography in the oldest section;
- ♦ Significant trees – Japanese Maple, Ginkgo, Katsura;
- ♦ Mature vegetation in good condition;
- ♦ Granite copings;
- ♦ Monuments and markers;
- ♦ Iron fencing around the Dickinson plot; and
- ♦ Town Tomb structure.

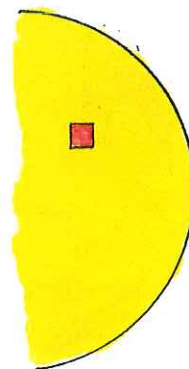


## HISTORIC LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

### LIGHTING



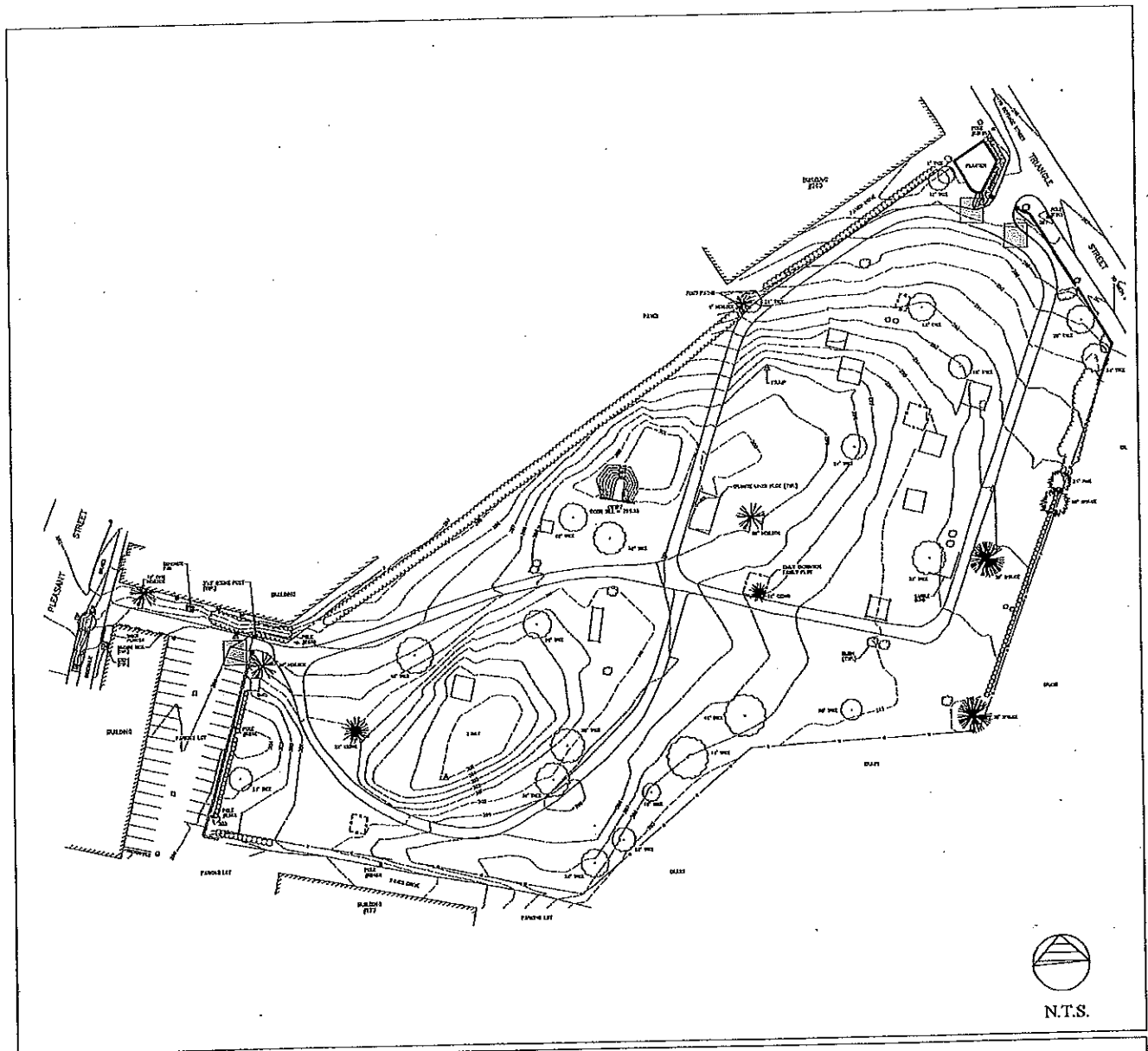
Pole Lighting – Over Abutting  
Lands



Pole Lighting – Over Cemetery

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## HISTORIC LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

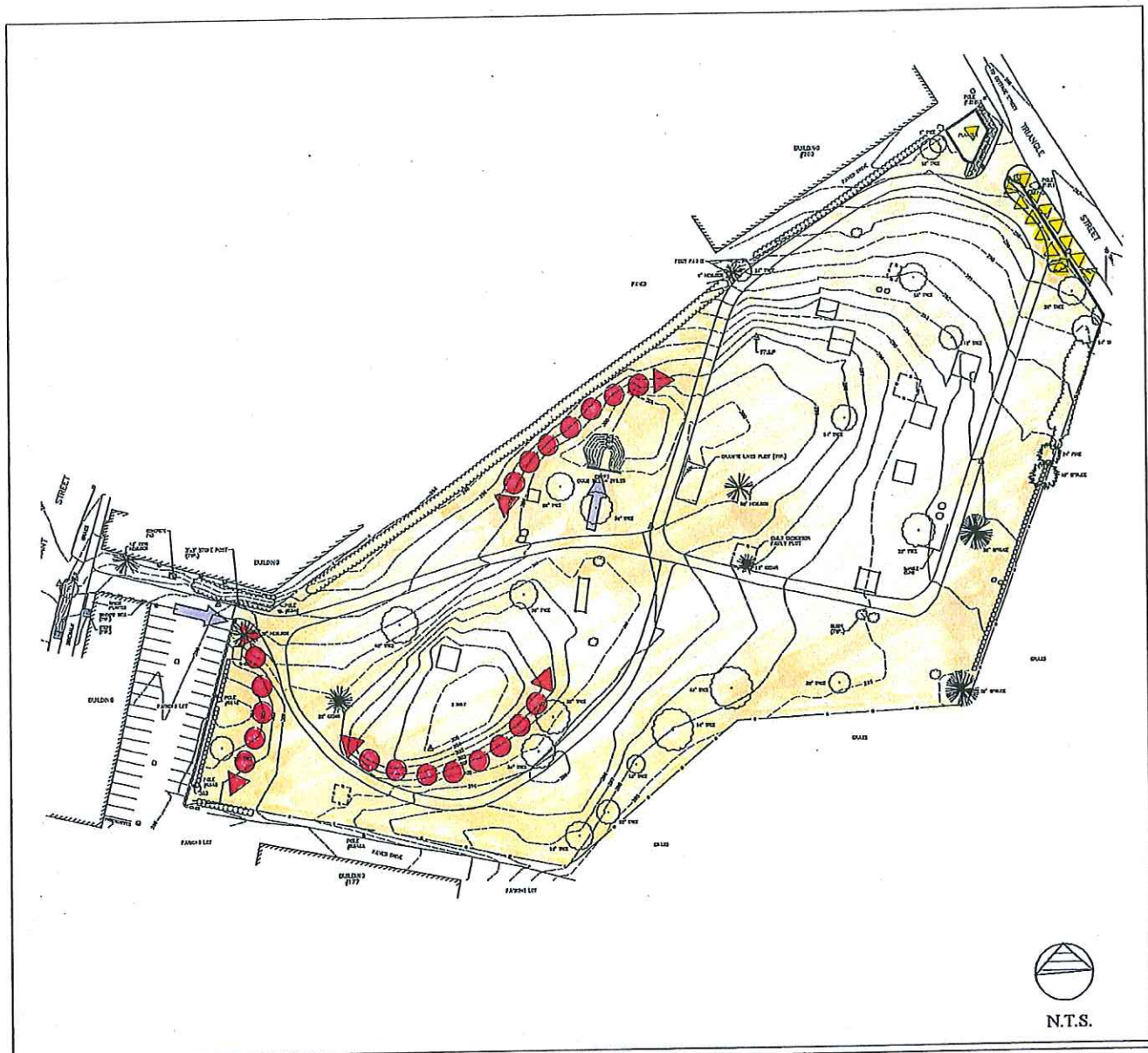
### SIGNS



Existing Sign (embedded in gate post)

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## HISTORIC LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

### VANDALISM



Trampled Plant Materials



Graffiti



Overnight Sleeping Spots



Broken Glass, Litter, Remnants of  
Illegal Substances

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The following features, elements, and areas should be returned to their original form:

- ♦ Gaylord Gates;
- ♦ Large shade trees, especially in the newer section;
- ♦ Pasture-like groundcover in older section;
- ♦ Camperdown Elm;
- ♦ Grass/turf roadway in the older section;
- ♦ Granite copings; and
- ♦ Monuments and markers.

*Areas for Restoration*

The following features, elements, and areas should be repaired or altered to make their use compatible with the Cemetery's historical value:

- ♦ Historic drive from North Pleasant Street to the Gaylord Gates;
- ♦ Western edge buffer;
- ♦ Southern edge buffer;
- ♦ Eastern edge buffer; and
- ♦ Gravel-like roadway surface in the newer section.

*Areas for Rehabilitation*

The following features, elements, and areas, no longer extant should be recreated:

- ♦ Cemetery fence;
- ♦ Allee of shade trees along Triangle Street;
- ♦ Ironwork gate to the Dickinson plot;
- ♦ Ironwork around the Cutler plot; and
- ♦ Town Tomb door.

*Areas for Reconstruction*



## RECOMMENDATIONS



The following chapter provides specific recommendations for treating the historic landscape at West Cemetery. The first section addresses physical treatment of the landscape. Organized around a series of eight "projects," the recommendations incorporate a combination of treatment methods, including preservation, restoration, rehabilitation and reconstruction. Specific recommendations for pedestrian and vehicular circulation, lighting, security, and interpretation and education follow.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

As noted in Chapter 3, "Historic Landscape Assessment," the edges surrounding West Cemetery have changed significantly over time and today cast an unsupportive shadow over the historic burying ground. They include the boundaries on all sides of the Cemetery, as well as the slivers of privately-owned land just outside these boundaries.

### *Project 1: West Cemetery Fence*

The Town of Amherst has made an effort to improve the eastern and western edges by planting Hemlock hedges. Quickly growing, these dense evergreens provide a tall, feathery barrier between the Cemetery and adjacent uses. However, because they stand as a monoculture, and are susceptible to disease, they could die, further weakening the Cemetery edges.



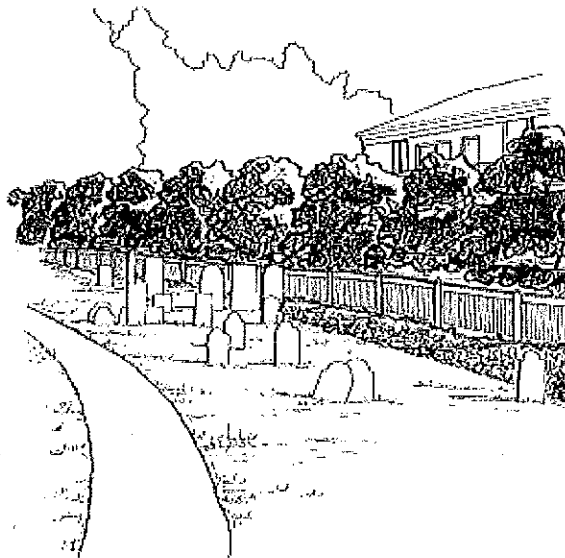
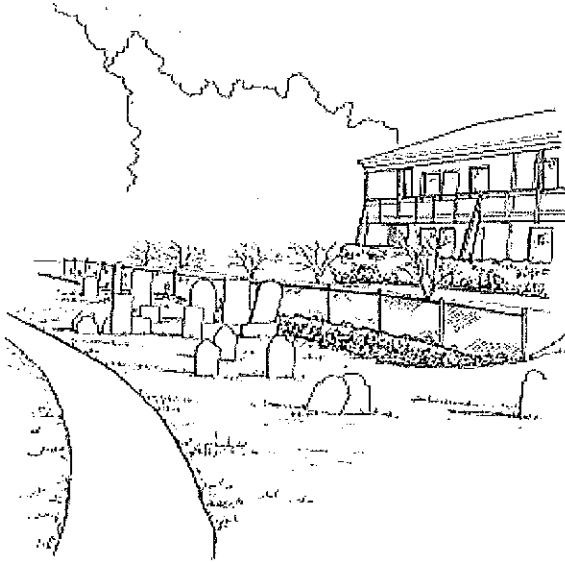
*The Cemetery's southern edge. An apartment complex crowds nearby gravestones.*

Planning for their replacement is the best solution to long term management of the Cemetery edges. The Town will need to plant new species if and when the Hemlocks become diseased. A list of recommended "buffer species" appears in the "Implementation" section of this Plan.

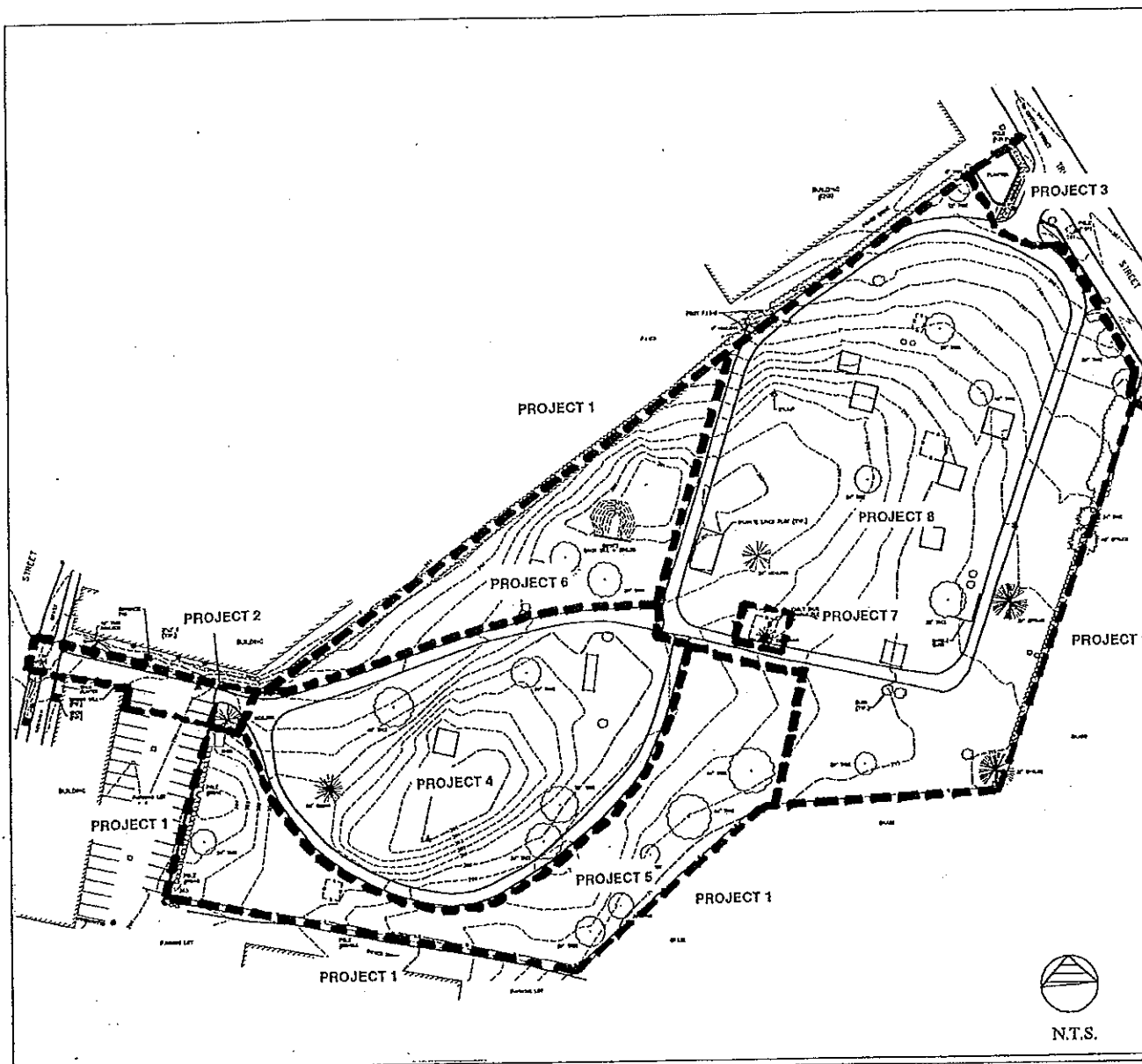
Treatment of the edges will: (1) unify the Cemetery visually, (2) provide a sense of separation between Cemetery and adjacent uses, (3) create a sense of enclosure for the Cemetery, and (4) increase control of access to the Cemetery. Treatment will also help re-establish Cemetery's the 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century character.

Recommendations include:

- ♦ ***Reconstructing the 4'-5'-high picket-style fence around the Cemetery periphery.*** Currently, several materials serve as boundary markers, from wire fencing to mature Austrian Pines. A continuous fence, constructed of one material in one style, will evoke the 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century character. At the Burnham Gate, the fence should be feathered into and/or combined with the existing stone wall.



*The southern edge before and after rehabilitation. By narrowing the asphalt driveway alongside the apartment building and planting a tall buffer of trees, the Cemetery will regain its sense of privacy and intimacy.*



## RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for treating the historic landscape at West Cemetery are organized around a series of eight projects. Each covers a distinct geographic region of the Cemetery, as shown in the graphic to the left. The projects include:

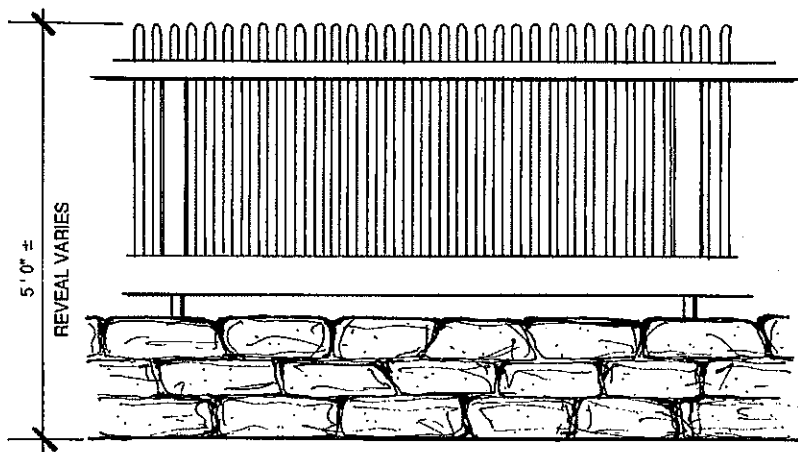
- Project 1: West Cemetery Fence
- Project 2: Gaylord Entrance
- Project 3: Burnham Entrance

- Project 4: 1730 "Knoll"
- Project 5: African American Burial Site
- Project 6: Town Tomb
- Project 7: Dickinson Plot
- Project 8: 1870 Section

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- ♦ **Rehabilitating the western edge.** Currently, Hemlocks line the rear property lines of the Carriage Shops, Pub, and DH Jones Realty Office. Along most of this edge, empty space stands between the Hemlocks and buildings. With agreement from adjacent landowners, this space could hold new plantings to increase the buffer width. The picket fence would stand just inside the Hemlock hedge.
- ♦ **Rehabilitating the eastern edge.** Here, Hemlock hedges (both mature and immature) demarcate the line between West Cemetery and the adjacent residences. While the mature plants provide a significant buffer, the low height of the immature plants allows views into neighbors' yards. An enhanced buffer will secure the privacy for neighbors as well as intimacy for the Cemetery.
- ♦ **Rehabilitating the southern edge.** This represents the weakest edge of West Cemetery, with a paved driveway and two-story apartment building towering over the Cemetery's oldest section. With agreement from the adjacent landowner, the driveway could be narrowed. Tall trees (exceeding the height of the apartment building roof), understory trees and shrubs could replace the removed pavement, creating a substantial buffer and blocking the apartment building when viewed from a distance. The picket fence would then rest just inside the buffer.



*Application of the picket-style fence to the existing stone retaining wall (adjacent to the Gaylord Entrance).*

**Project 2: Gaylord  
Entrance**

This historic entrance to West Cemetery lies along its western side, behind the Carriage Shops, and connects the Cemetery to North Pleasant Street. Its features include the 1908 Gaylord gateposts, the land just inside the gates, and the historic access drive from North Pleasant Street.



*The historic access road and Gaylord Gates. Improvement of the entrance would allow pedestrians access to the 1908 gateway.*

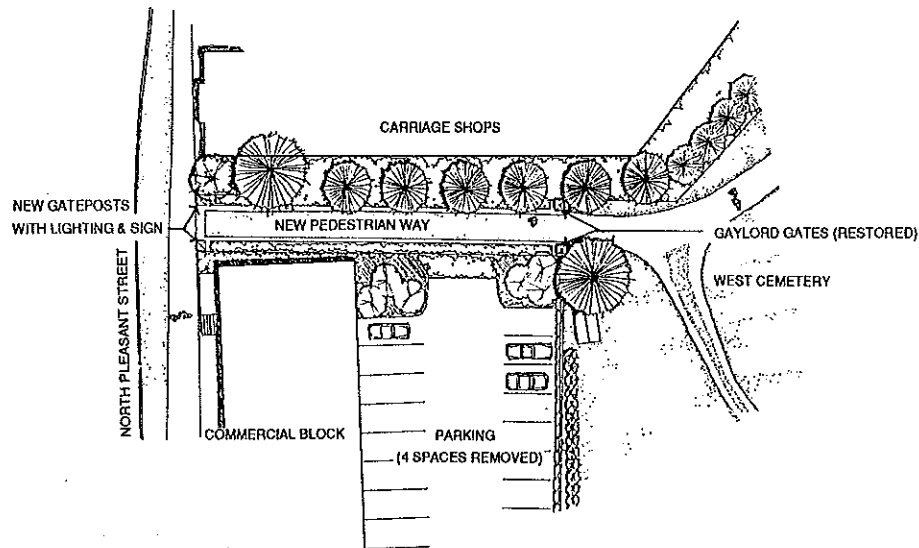
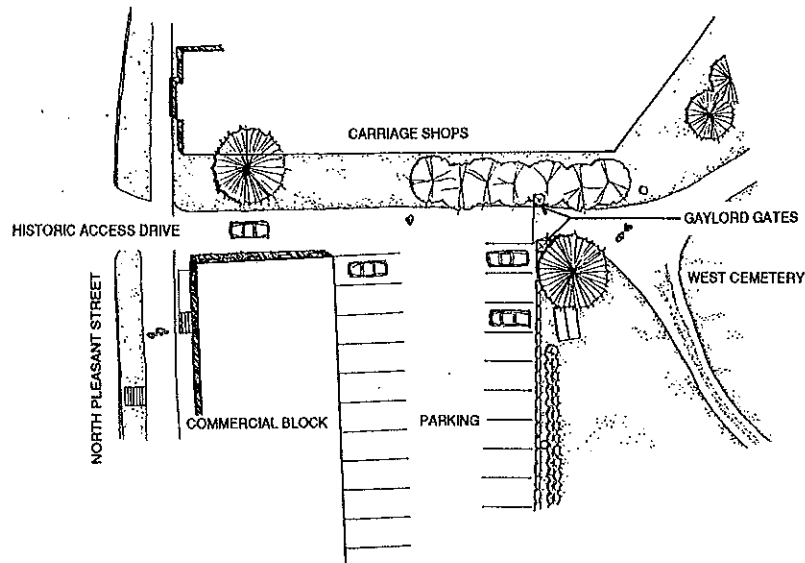
Treatment of this entrance will provide a clearly marked route for pedestrians from North Pleasant Street into the Cemetery. Its location at the edge of the oldest section offers a prime location for interpretive signs, and/or the beginning of interpretive tours. Recommendations include:

- ♦ **Restoring the 1908 gateposts.** Currently the posts stand in what appears to be their original location, but graffiti covers their sides. Their top ornaments – orbs – have fallen off or were stolen. Treatment would include cleaning and (possibly) re-pointing the stone posts and reconstructing the orbs. New picket-style fencing should abut each post, and a picket-style gate should be attached to the posts, allowing the Town of control access after dusk.
- ♦ **Rehabilitating the historic access drive from North Pleasant Street.** Currently used as an “exit” drive to the nearby parking lot, this important way is covered with asphalt. Rehabilitation would include (1) reclaiming the access drive for use by the Town of Amherst, (2) removing any scrubby or invasive growth along the drive, (3) removing the curb cut at North Pleasant Street and, with approval of the abutting landowner, (4) removing two to four parking spaces from the adjacent parking lot (to allow cars turn-around space). Other improvements to this drive could include placing a second set of stone posts at the sidewalk along North Pleasant Street, adding new plantings along the north and south edges of the drive, and creating a six-feet-wide pedestrian way covered with stone dust and edged in granite. The blank walls on buildings to the north and south of the access way offer excellent opportunities for artwork and/or plantings. Period lighting added

to one or both sets of posts could bring further attention to this historic drive.

In addition to these treatments, we recommend one further improvement:

- ♦ *Creating an interpretative station inside the gate.* The land just inside the gateposts offers an excellent spot for an interpretive station and/or seating area. The existing Yew provides an evergreen buffer between the Cemetery and adjacent parking lot, and visitors can glimpse the oldest section from this spot.



*The Gaylord Gate before and after rehabilitation. By reclaiming the historic access drive, the Town can establish a clear pedestrian way between North Pleasant Street and the Cemetery.*



**Project 3: Burnham  
Entrance**

The 1955 Burnham Gate lies along the northern edge, providing the only vehicular access into the Cemetery. It features a pair of stone gate posts, mortared stone wall, granite curb-trimmed planter, planting bed, and a walkway along the south side of Triangle Street connecting the Gate to Pray Street.



*The 1955 Burnham Gate. Mature Elms once lined Triangle Street, creating a sense of security along the Cemetery edge.*

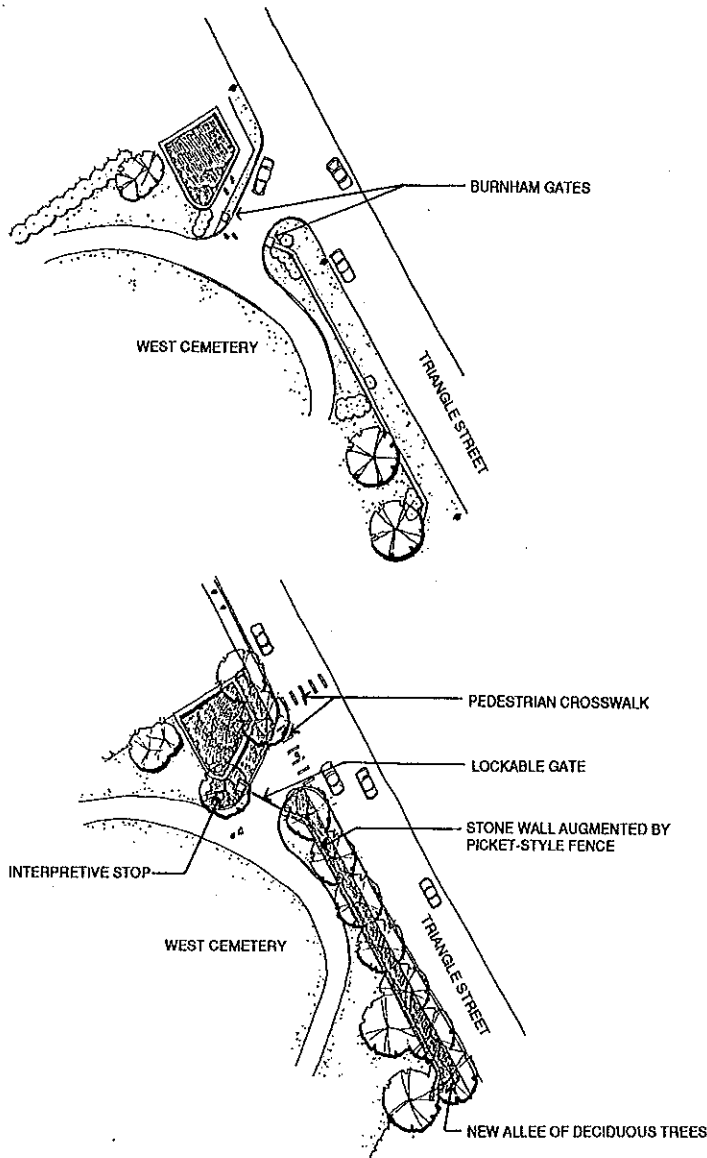
Treatment of the entrance will enhance what is known today as the Cemetery's main gate, including:

- ♦ *Reconstructing (replanting) the allee of shade trees along Triangle Street.* Elms once lined the street, creating a bold edge. When the Town built the Burnham Gate, the trees were removed and not replaced. The result is an open view from the Cemetery to Triangle Street and adjacent strip development. The addition of tall shade trees, tolerant of urban conditions, will recreate this strong edge.
- ♦ *Rehabilitating the stone walls along Triangle Street.* To keep visitors from jumping the walls, fencing can be added to the top stones. This should be of a material compatible with the pickets proposed for the remainder of the cemetery. A gate, constructed of material complementary to the fence and matching that at the Gaylord entrance, should be added to the existing stone posts, so that the Cemetery may be secured at dusk.

In addition to these treatments, we recommend three other improvements:

- ♦ *Defining clearer pedestrian circulation routes outside the Burnham Gate.* Students walking to the Cemetery from the High School need a defined crossing over Triangle Street, and pedestrians along Triangle Street need established sidewalks. These improvements, combined with traffic warning signs, will help walkers reach the Cemetery more safely.

- ♦ *Creating an interpretive station just inside the Burnham Gate.* This should include interpretive signs and seating, located to the west side of the entry road.
- ♦ *Adding lighting to the entrance.* Tree-mounted lighting, resembling moonlight, can be added to the canopies of tall trees, allowing police better views into the Cemetery at night.



*Rehabilitation of the historic Burnham Gate. A new allee of deciduous trees, planted along Triangle Street, creates a separation between the Cemetery and street.*

**Project 4: 1730 "Knoll"**

The small rise or "Knoll" in the southwestern section contains many of the oldest gravesites. Its other features include the dirt and turf roadway



*The 1730 section or "Knoll." The area may contain some of the Downtown's only unaltered landform.*

at its base, monuments and markers, granite copings, and historic trees. Since this area may contain some of the only unaltered topography in downtown Amherst, we recommend its contours be protected. However, several treatments to its individual features will help its overall appearance, and restore its 1730's feel. They include:

- ♦ ***Preserving the existing landform.*** We recommend the Town prohibit new pathways or other intrusions to the topography.
- ♦ ***Rehabilitating the Knoll "floor".*** As noted in Chapter 2, the Knoll likely resembled a meadow or pasture during its first 150 years, with groundcovers, meadow grasses and wildflowers growing on its slopes. Today, such a planting might appear unkempt, and invite vandalism. To recreate the feel of a meadow without its height, we recommend introducing low hardy groundcovers, such as perennial Thyme, creeping Phlox, and Mosses. For added texture, Snowdrops, Black-Eyed Susans, Indian Paintbrushes, Willow Gentian, Lupine, and Queen Anne's Lace could be planted in swaths, and mown once a year. A complete list of suggested plant materials appears in the "Implementation" section of this plan.
- ♦ ***Preserving or restoring monuments and markers.*** Chapter 3 shows approximately thirty monuments and markers in need of repair. Treatment of these should occur as part of this project to help complete a finished look for the Knoll. Recommended treatment methods appear in the Appendix to this Plan.



*It is likely that the Cemetery's oldest section once resembled a meadow or pasture. By replacing the turf in the 1730 Section with woody groundcovers and perennials, this 18<sup>th</sup> century effect can be restored. Photo c. 1900, courtesy of the Jones Library, Special Collections.*

- ♦ **Preserving or restoring granite copings.** In addition to the monuments and markers, the granite copings, demarcating family plots should be preserved or restored. Treatment methods for each appear in the Appendix to this plan.
- ♦ **Rehabilitating the dirt and turf roadway.** This was probably the Cemetery's first, laid out in 1854. Currently the material covering them ranges from gravel to dirt to turf. Dirt and turf evoke the image of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> burial ground, and we recommend a stabilized combination of these materials remain.

Located along the Cemetery's eastern edge, this grassy swath contains graves of Amherst's African American citizens. Treating this area will complete improvements to the Cemetery's oldest section, and will honor some of the less fortunate members of the Amherst community. Recommendations include:

- ♦ **Rehabilitating the floor of the African American Burial Site.** Today covered with turf, the ground requires regular mowing and does not adequately reflect the historic character of this area. Planting and encouraging growth of shade-loving groundcovers, such as Periwinkle, Lily-of-the-Valley, Aegopodium and others, will give the area a distinctive character, more true to its past. (Refer to the "Recommendations" section of this Plan for a list of recommended species.)

#### **Project 5: African American Burial Site**



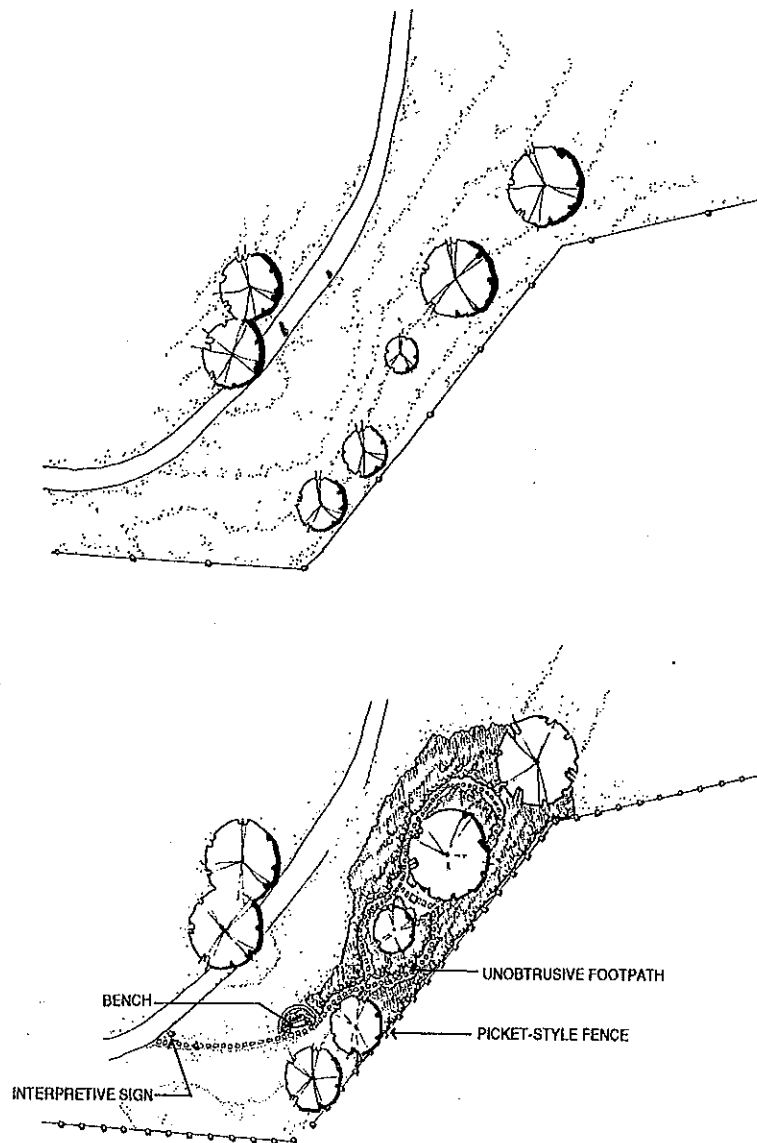
*The African American Burial Site. Lack of monuments and markers distinguishes this historic area from the remainder of the Cemetery.*

- ♦ ***Preserving the historic ornamental trees.*** The area contains several mature ornamentals, including a Gingko and Katsura. The Town should make every effort to stabilize these, as they provide shade and a sense of scale, and add to the Cemetery's historic character.
- ♦ ***Adding lighting.*** Tree-mounted lighting, resembling moonlight, can be added to the canopies of tall trees, allowing police better views into the Cemetery at night.

The following elements lie within close proximity to the African American Burial Site, and while unrelated, could be included in this project:

- ♦ ***Reconstructing the Cutler plot fencing.*** One of only two ornamental fences surrounding family plots, the Cutler plot fencing is decayed and damaged. Reconstructing this would help revive the Victorian appearance that dominated the Cemetery during the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Reconstruction is required because of the fence's severe condition. Recommended treatment appears in Appendix B of this Plan.
- ♦ ***Restoring monuments and markers.*** This area contains over twenty memorials in need of restoration. Repair of these will complete the preservation of the Cemetery's oldest section. Recommended treatments appear in Appendix A of this Plan.

In addition to these treatments, we recommend that the African American Burial Site be marked with an interpretive sign, accompanied by a bench. This site, away from the Cemetery entrances, tucked behind the Knoll and shaded by Austrian Pines, offers a quiet spot for contemplation, and an ideal location for learning about Amherst's historically diverse population.

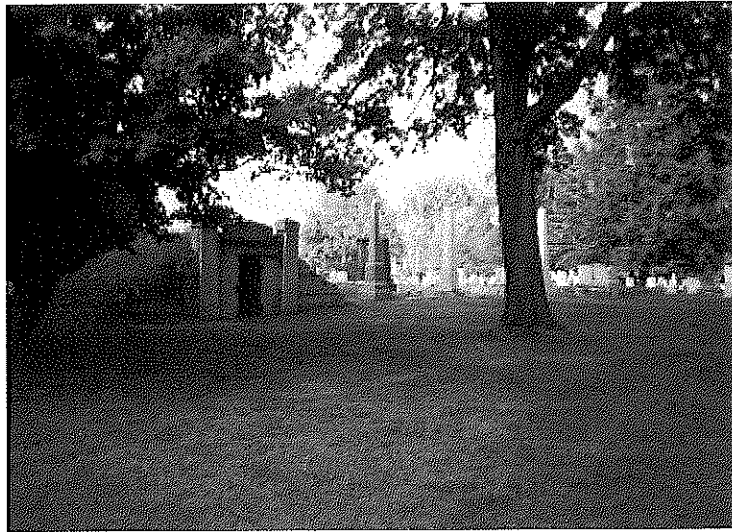


*The African American Burial Site before and after rehabilitation. New footpaths, interpretive signs, and seating allow visitors a more intimate experience with this unmarked area.*



### *Project 6: Town Tomb*

One of the Cemetery's main focal points, the Town Tomb stands at the edge of the oldest section, near the western boundary. Its features include the Tomb structure, surrounding lawn, several historic trees, and the gravesites to its west.

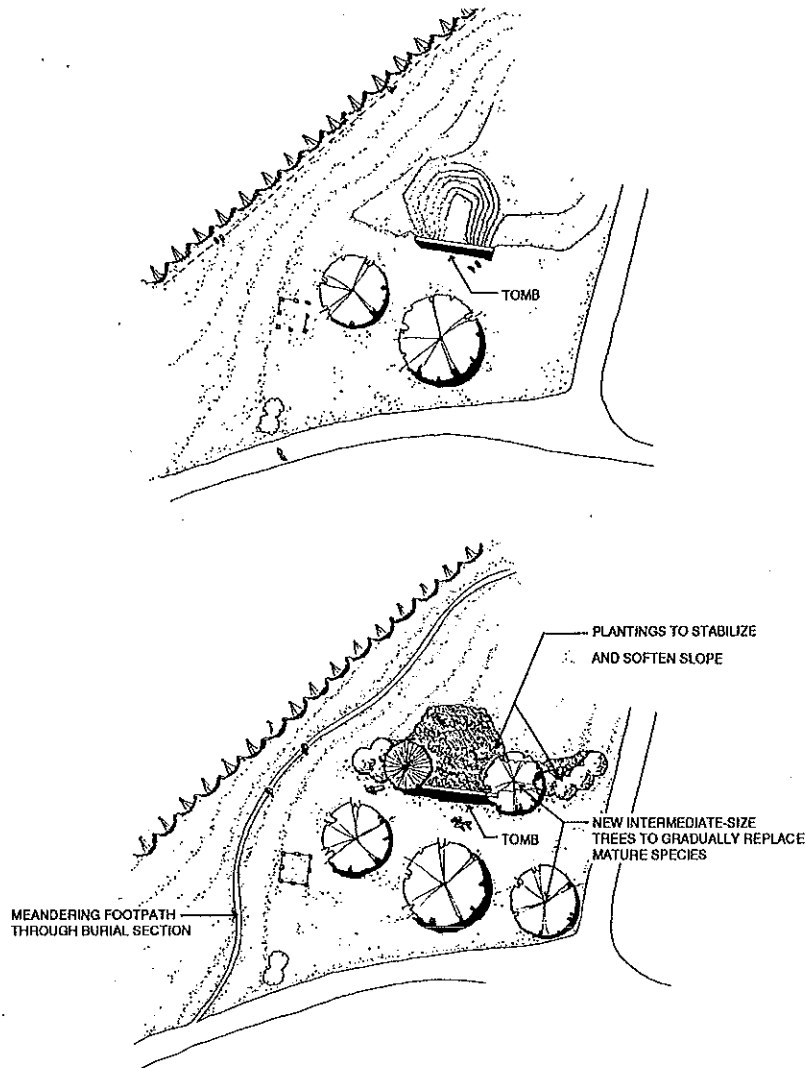


*The Town Tomb lies at the heart of the Cemetery, serving as one of the main focal points.*

Restoring the Tomb and environs will bring greater distinction to this historic feature, and will enhance the Cemetery's only real gathering space. We recommend the following treatments:

- ♦ ***Restoring the Town Tomb.*** Our structural assessment of the Tomb showed very little settling, cracking or overall degradation. Restoration would include repairing one crack in the Tomb wall and stabilizing the fascia stones. Reconstructing the door (reusing the hinges) would further enhance its historic character. Refer to Appendices B and C for specific treatment recommendations.
- ♦ ***Preserving the historic trees.*** One of the Cemetery's finest trees, a Japanese Maple, stands to the west of the Tomb, helping to enclose the turf "forecourt." The Town should make every effort to stabilize this as well as the towering Black Oak. They add scale, shade and beauty to this historic receiving area.
- ♦ ***Rehabilitating the Tomb landscape.*** The addition of groundcovers on the Tomb slopes will help stabilize this landform and soften it. In front of the Tomb, new, intermediate-size shade trees will eventually replace the very mature Oak, assuring a long-term feeling of enclosure or "space" by the Cemetery's only real gathering place. Lamps, fixed to the exterior, will illuminate the space in front of the Tomb.
- ♦ ***Restoring monuments and markers.*** This area contains approximately thirteen memorials in need of restoration. Recommended treatments appear in Appendix A of this Plan.

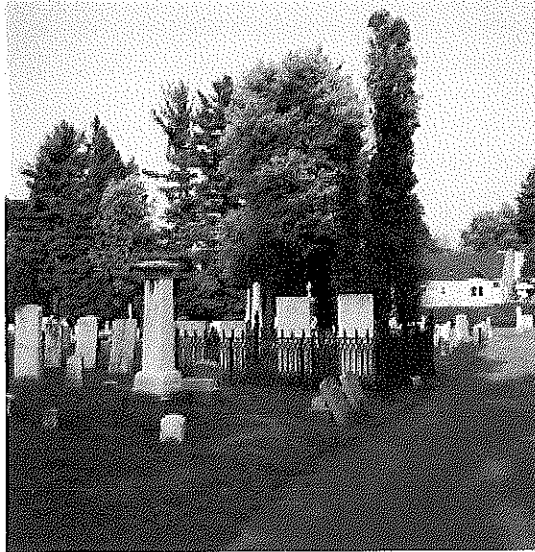
- ♦ **Rehabilitation access through the Tomb area.** Currently, pedestrians cut through this area, creating a wear path and damaging markers. By establishing a narrow, unobtrusive path from the Burnham Gate to the Gaylord Gate, the Town can make this area accessible without continuing to degrade the landscape.



The Town Tomb area before and after rehabilitation. New plantings around the Tomb will help stabilize the slope and create more of an enclosed "space" in front of the structure.

**Project 7: Dickinson Plot**

The most visited site at West Cemetery, the Dickinson plot lies at the edge of the oldest section, just east of the Town Tomb. The fenced area shows signs of heavy use, with wear paths lining the western side, near the poet's grave.



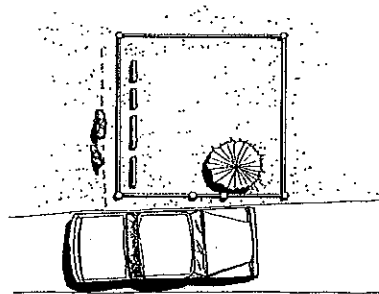
*The Dickinson family plot. Treatment will upgrade its setting and provide better access to visitors.*

Treatment of the plot and its immediate environs would affirm the Town's respect for this historical figure, and help insure long term protection of the gravesite. We recommend the following:

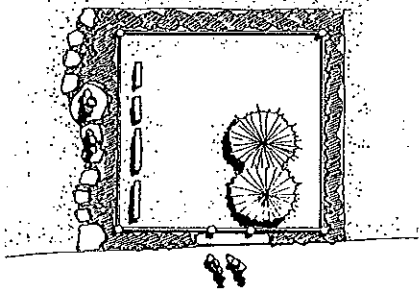
- ♦ **Rehabilitating the plot's perimeter.** The many visitors at all times of year have created a worn appearance around the outskirts of the plot. By taking control of this area, the Town can better manage this degradation. Rehabilitation would include introducing an unobtrusive path leading from the road to the plot, with stepping stones placed in the turf. Hardy groundcovers could surround the stones, creating a tougher surface. At the perimeter, groundcovers could provide a managed appearance, and stepping stones placed near Dickinson's headstone would permit intimacy with the gravesite.
- ♦ **Restoring and Reconstructing the plot fencing.** Cast iron fencing currently surrounds the plot. As the "Landscape Assessment" observes, this is in very good condition, but needs exterior treatment. The gate, however, is not original, and would need to be reconstructed to match the original fencing. Treatment should also include reconstructing the original porcelain gate handle.
- ♦ **Rehabilitating the interior plantings.** While historic photos reveal two Arbor vitae inside the fencing, only one remains. Turf appears to have covered the plot floor, and should therefore be sustained.
- ♦ **Preserving the headstones.** While not original to the plot, the Town should take extra care to stabilize the existing headstones.

In addition to these treatments, we also recommend the Town make the following efforts with the Dickinson family plot:

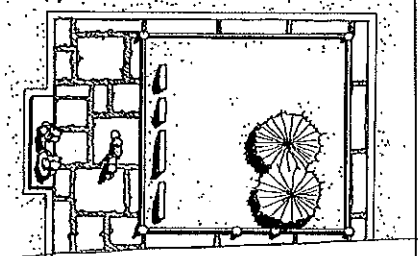
- ♦ *Search for the original grave markers.* Historic photographs reveal short stones in the early years of the plot. At some point, the Dickinson family replaced these with the current tablets. The Town should make an attempt to locate these stones, and return them to West Cemetery.
- ♦ *Provide interpretive signs and seating near the plot.* Visitors need a spot to rest and read about and reflect on the poetess, her work and life. An unobtrusive bench and accompanying sign (coordinated with others in the Cemetery) near the gravesite would provide such a resting place.



Existing



Option 1



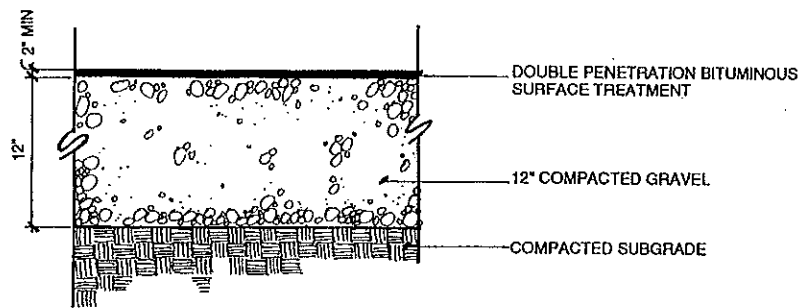
Option 2

Two options for rehabilitation of the landscape around the Dickinson plot. In each, groundcovers soften the plot edges, and stepping stones provide a cleaner route to the poet's grave.

### Project 8: 1870 Section

The final project involves treatment of the Cemetery's newer section, in the northeastern half. This area includes the Clark gravesite, several historic trees, many granite copings, and many monuments and markers in need of treatment. While more contemporary than the older "burying ground" half, the 1870 Section once displayed a distinctly Victorian character. With the loss of shade and ornamental trees and plot ornamentation, this character has waned. We recommend the following treatments to help restore this late-19<sup>th</sup> century feel:

- ♦ **Reconstructing the roadways.** Currently paved with bituminous asphalt, they have a 20<sup>th</sup> century, suburban appearance. By applying a continuous oil and chip surface (hot or cold mix), the Town can reclaim the feel of gravel, and at the same time, maintain a stable surface.



*Detail of the "oil and chip" or "chipseal" surface. Resurfacing the road will result in a more historically-accurate appearance.*

- ♦ **Rehabilitating the tree cover.** Once dotted with tall shade trees, the 1870 section contained room-like spaces, making the Cemetery seem more intimate and private. The loss of these in the 1938 hurricane and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Dutch Elm epidemic resulted in a barren look over the landscape. By introducing tall-growing shade trees in vacant gravesites and/or along roadways, the intimacy and privacy will return. Species with non-invasive root structures should be chosen, so as not to harm existing gravesites.
- ♦ **Reconstructing (re-introducing) the Camperdown Elm.** Once one of the cemetery's most cherished trees, the Camperdown Elm at the Clark gravesite perished in the 1960's. Replanting this tree (with disease-resistant Elm root stock) will bring back this treasured feature. A location near the Clark gravesite would be ideal, if open land exists.



*The historic Camperdown Elm at the gravesite of William Smith Clark. Re-introducing the tree to a spot near Clark's grave will enhance the 1870 Section. Photo courtesy of the Jones Library, Special Collections.*

- ♦ **Preserving mature shade trees.** Some mature shade trees remain and the Town should make every effort to stabilize these. They provide shade and a sense of scale, and add to the Cemetery's historic character.
- ♦ **Restoring monuments and markers.** Many monuments and markers are in need of treatment in the 1870 Section. While fewer per square foot than the older section, these memorials offer a glimpse into the Town's past, from the Victorian era through the present. Recommended treatments appear in Appendix A of this Plan.
- ♦ **Preserving or restoring granite copings.** In addition to the monuments and markers, the granite copings, demarcating family plots should be preserved or restored. Treatment methods for each appear in Appendix C of this Plan.
- ♦ **Reconstructing cast iron family plot fencing.** While no longer extant, many iron fenceings stood in around family plots in the 1870 Section. To evoke the Victorian character, these should be reintroduced around plots where evidence of prior fencing exists.

As the Town secures support for preservation, it may want to reorganize the projects and/or fund landscape elements that span several projects. The chart on the following page divides the projects among the many landscape elements.

#### **Note on Project Organization**



<i>PROJECT ELEMENT</i>	<i>PROJECT AREA</i>	1: Cemetery Fence	2: Gaylord Entrance	3: Burnham Entrance	4: 1730 "Knoll"	5: African American	6: Town Tomb	7: Dickinson	8: 1870 Section
Design		●	●	●			●	●	
Fencing/Gate		●	●	●					
Stone Coping/Curbing Treatment					●	●	●		●
Stone/Monument Treatment			●		●	●	●		●
Ironwork Treatment					●	●		●	●
Interpretive Sign			●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Directional Sign			●	●					
Seating			●	●			●	●	
Oil & Chip Paving									●
Gravel & Turf Paving					●				
Lighting			●	●		●	●	●	
Tree Preservation					●	●	●	●	●
Tree Planting		●	●	●					●
Shrub Planting		●	●	●			●	●	
Perennial/Groundcover Planting			●	●	●	●	●		
Turf								●	
Crosswalk				●					
Sidewalk (New/Refurbished)			●	●					
Footpath						●	●	●	

The overall goal of circulation in West Cemetery, as proposed in segments in the treatment projects described above, is to limit the stress on this historic landscape while, at the same time, provide unimpeded access to its many special features. Therefore, the new system of pedestrian and vehicular circulation will reflect the following:

- ♦ **Two established entrances.** Visitors will enter through one of two gates – the Gaylord, off North Pleasant Street, or the Burnham, off Triangle Street. Each entrance will feature enhanced plantings, signs, seating and lighting. A stronger Cemetery edge will eliminate all other makeshift entrances.
- ♦ **Limited vehicular circulation.** Vehicles will access the Cemetery through the Burnham Gate, only, and will follow the paved (chip seal) surfaces only. This route will allow visitors to drive up the steepest slopes and access the Dickinson plot and walk to the 1730 section. Vehicles will be prohibited from the 1730's and surrounding sections.
- ♦ **New pedestrian ways.** Two unobtrusive pathways will allow visitors access to special areas within the Cemetery. At the African American site, visitors will meander through the wooded area, stopping at a seating area to rest and read an interpretive sign. Visitors will also have access to the back side of the Town Tomb and nearby gravesites, via a winding pathway linking the Burnham and Gaylord Gates.

As the "Landscape Assessment" revealed, light fixtures at West Cemetery produce an uneven pattern of illumination, drawing attention to the makeshift entrances, rather than the Cemetery's prominent features. The above treatment projects propose a new schematic lighting system, demarcating the entrances and casting soft illumination over the Cemetery's darker sections. To further develop and implement this plan, the Town should work with the Amherst Police Department to affirm the Cemetery's most problematic spots. Details of the schematic lighting plan include:

- ♦ **Pole-mounted lighting at the entrances.** Pole-mounted lamps will mark the newly-designed and/or restored Gaylord and Burnham Gates. Depending on the final design of these entrances, these fixtures could meld with the gatepost themselves, or stand freely.
- ♦ **Diffused lighting in the Cemetery core.** Resembling moonlight, when appended to the tall trees, this lighting will illuminate the Cemetery floor in the African American burial area, 1730 section, and Burnham Gate area.
- ♦ **Lighting at the Town Tomb.** Lamps fixed to the Town Tomb will add illumination to this popular gathering spot.

## Circulation

## Lighting

## Security

As the "Landscape Assessment" revealed, vandalism at West Cemetery occurs frequently, taxing the Cemetery landscape and Town maintenance crew. By implementing the physical improvements described above, and interpretation and education programs outlined below, the Town will invite positive activities to replace the more questionable ones. In addition, adding the following security measures should further these anti-vandalism efforts.

- ♦ *Posting Cemetery regulations and "no trespassing" signs.* Currently, the Town does not post the Cemetery with "no trespassing" signs nor does it display other Cemetery regulations. Making these rules clear to the public is one simple way to establish control over Cemetery use.
- ♦ *Locking the gates at night.* Once the perimeter is upgraded and the continuous fence and gates added, the Town will have better control of access after dusk. With gates, the Town will have the option of closing and locking the perimeter, if needed.
- ♦ *Applying fines to trespassers.* The Cemetery is currently off limits to visitors after dusk, yet violators are not currently fined. By fining trespassers, the Town may deter nighttime use, which is when most vandalism occurs.
- ♦ *Issuing passes to nighttime users.* Currently, legitimate groups do use the Cemetery after dark, such as the Astronomy Club. By issuing fee-bearing permits to these organizations, the Town could further its control and, at the same time, raise additional funds for Cemetery preservation. The police or other Town department could manage this permitting process.

## Interpretation & Education

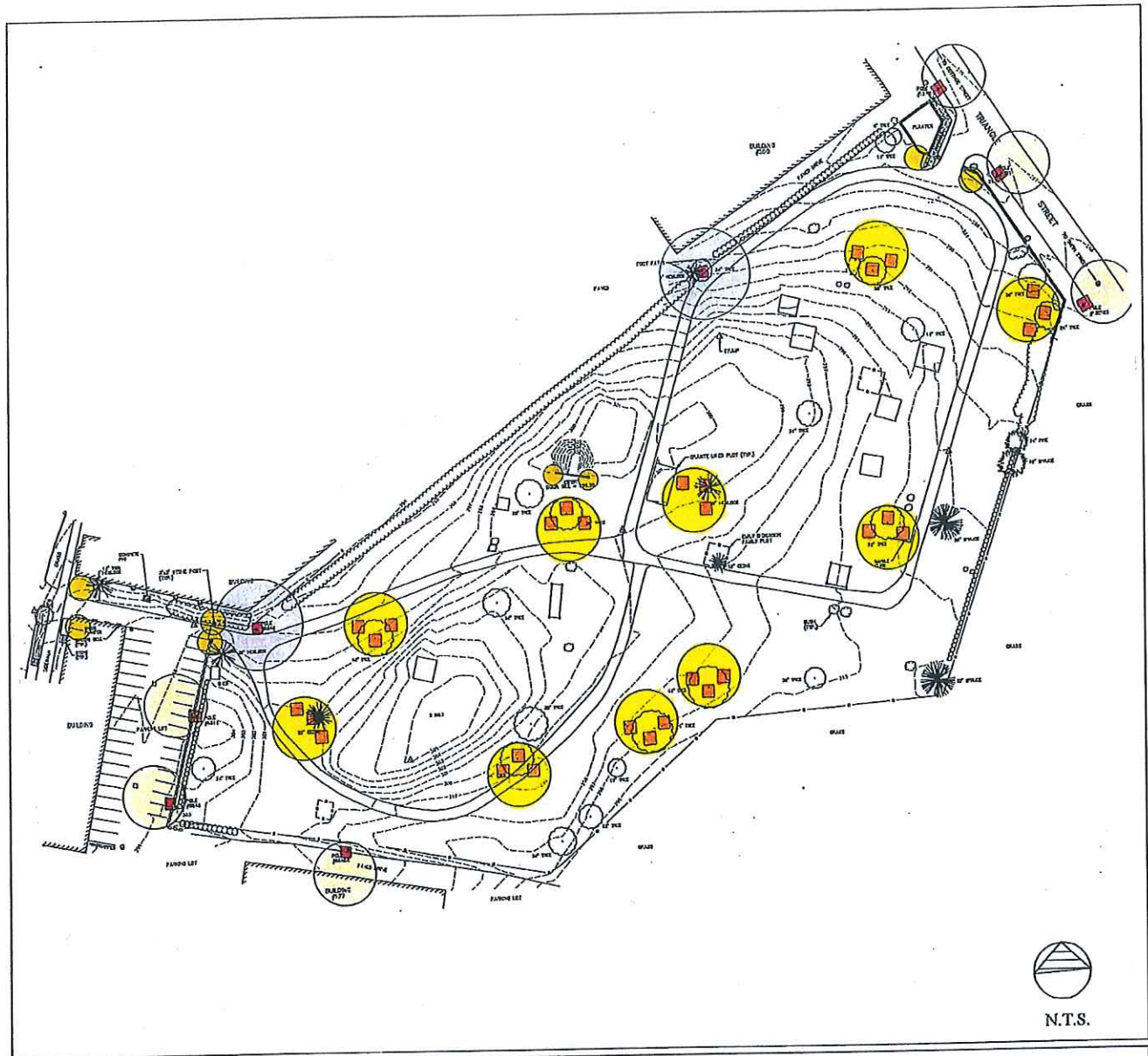
While hundreds, perhaps thousands of visitors come to West Cemetery each year to see the Emily Dickinson grave, lack of directional and interpretive signs make locating the site difficult. In addition to this the Cemetery lies tucked behind commercial buildings and residences. Many visitors to Amherst have difficulty finding the Cemetery and some long time residents, are altogether unfamiliar with the site. A variety of measures – including both physical improvements and programs – can help improve the accessibility of West Cemetery, making it a viable historic resource within the Town.

## Physical Improvements

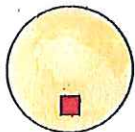
Physical improvements include amendments to the landscape that will help visitors access and learn about West Cemetery:

- ♦ *Interpretive Sign Program.* Establish a sign standard or standards (with both materials and graphics) and place signs in locations indicated in the eight treatment projects above: at both entrances, near the vault, at the Dickinson and Clark gravesites, and near the African American burial area. Provide interpretive information in several languages, including Japanese, Spanish, Cambodian, and French, as well as English.

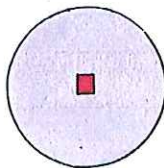




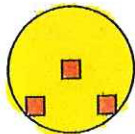
### PROPOSED LIGHTING



Existing Pole Lighting



Lighting to be Removed



Diffused Lighting



Lamp Fixture

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- ♦ **Horticultural Sign Program.** In addition to the interpretive and directional signs, the Town can inform visitors about the Cemetery's horticultural holdings by applying labels to the trees and shrubs. This will appeal to many visitors, from plant enthusiasts to young science students to university-level botany students and teachers. Such a program could dovetail with other Town-wide efforts to identify and label plant materials.
- ♦ **Established Pathways.** While the existing roadways allow visitors access to many of the gravesites, the more remote areas of the Cemetery, such as the African American burial area, are more difficult to reach. By adding a simple path through this site, visitors can learn about Amherst's diverse populations in a more intimate way. Similarly, by adding a pathway leading from the Burnham Gate to the Gaylord Gate, behind the Town Tomb, visitors can take a shorter route and, at the same time, tread closer to these historic gravesites.

Interpretive and educational programs include efforts to inform the public about the importance of West Cemetery in the Town's physical development and social history. Amherst should strive to include as many members of the community possible, from young children, to visitors from foreign lands, to the elderly. Possible programs include:

- ♦ **Illustrative Map & Guide.** Currently, no map of West Cemetery exists to help guide visitors to its many features and important gravesites. Such a map could include, in addition to roadway and path names, historical data, viewing locations and horticultural information. If produced in color, with lively graphics and text, it could provide visitors with an engaging take-away piece of memorabilia. The Town could make this available at the visitor information booth, library, historical society, Dickinson Homestead, and other selected spots as a means of encouraging widespread visitation to the Cemetery.
- ♦ **Interpretive Brochures.** These can take forms ranging from a single 4-1/4" x 11" sheet to a larger fold-out pamphlet focused around a specific Cemetery-related topic. Emily Dickinson, William Smith Clark, the several presidents of Amherst College, the African Americans, and the importance of the Cemetery in the physical evolution of the Town could all be topics of such brochures.
- ♦ **Newsletter.** As the Town progresses with its preservation efforts, the Historical Commission (or "Friends" group, if formed) could publish a newsletter. This could include stories about treatment of the Cemetery landscape, profiles of historic figures buried at the Cemetery, and tales about West Cemetery families. A space within the newsletter could address potential donors – a form to be clipped and mailed to the Town with a monetary contribution.

## Programs

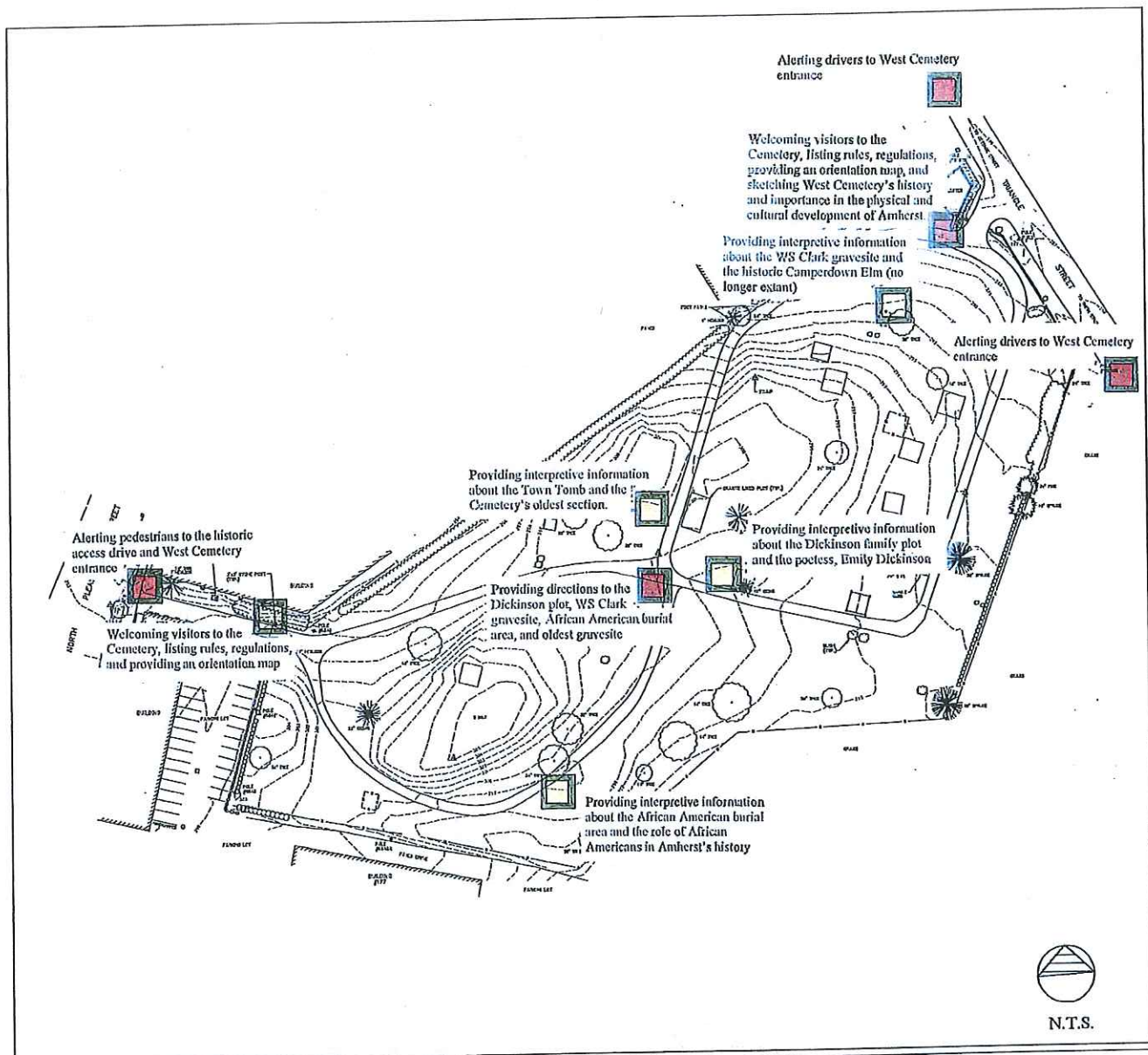
- ♦ **Press Releases.** The Historical Commission (or "Friends" group) could issue press releases when programs and restoration events take place in West Cemetery. This would help maintain an ongoing level public enthusiasm for the preservation effort.
- ♦ **Tours.** Because of its location in the heart of Amherst's downtown, West Cemetery is a perfect complement to walking and other tours. In addition to programs already sponsored by the Dickinson Homestead, the Cemetery could be part of an historic landscape tour, horticultural tour, cemetery tour, 18<sup>th</sup> century tour and others. These programs could take the form of (1) audio tours, where visitors would follow a route narrated on an audio tape, (2) self-guided tours, where visitors would follow a map with accompanying written information, or (3) guided tours, where guides would accompany visitors, stopping at each point of significance. Such tours could be planned in six-month blocks as a series, and the Town could sell subscriptions as a means of raising funds for Cemetery preservation.
- ♦ **Website.** While the Dickinson Homestead includes West Cemetery on its website, opportunity exists for the Town to sponsor a website just for the Cemetery. This would allow visitors – especially those from out of town – to study the Cemetery and its features before reaching the Cemetery. Website features could include a map of the Cemetery and its location in Amherst, photographs of the important gravesites, links to related historic sites in Amherst (South and North Cemeteries, Wildwood Cemetery, the History Museum, Jones Library, Dickinson Homestead, etc.), and links to other websites about historical figures buried at West Cemetery. Refer to Appendix D for a sample home page from an historic cemetery.
- ♦ **Special Events.** To engage the many potential user groups for West Cemetery, the Town could form partnerships with other organizations and host special events. This could include a "Children's Day" in conjunction with the Jones Library, where youngsters could attend a treasure hunt, participate in a tour, and listen to stories related to West Cemetery's historical figures.
- ♦ **Stone Restoration Programs.** The "Landscape Assessment" section of this report studied the condition of the gravestones at the Cemetery, and made specific recommendations for treatment (refer to Appendix A). Through a coordinated volunteer effort, the Town could make many of these repairs. One way to train these volunteers is to sponsor a stone restoration workshop, where each technique can be explored in a hands-on format.

## Curriculum

The following programs could help bring the West Cemetery landscape into the schools at the primary, secondary, and post-secondary levels:

- ♦ **Drama Curriculum.** West Cemetery offers an excellent platform for students of drama, at either the secondary or post secondary levels,





### PROPOSED SIGNAGE



Interpretive Signs



Directional Signs

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or both. Using the Dickinson plot area as a stage, they could learn about and execute historical re-enactments of life in Amherst during the poet's time.

- ♦ **English Curriculum.** West Cemetery could also inspire students of both fiction, non-fiction, and poetry. Secondary level classes could create works of fiction based on clues in the cemetery landscape (such as the African American graves, or gravesite of a drifter). Non-fiction writing could center the actual lives of Amherst citizens, or the physical development of the Town. West Cemetery provided inspiration to Emily Dickinson 100 years ago. It could do the same for students of poetry today.
- ♦ **History Curriculum.** Secondary students could identify unusual features in the Cemetery landscape and research their origins. An example might be a gravesite holding several infants, from which students could begin a study of infant death in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Cemetery offers an excellent source of material for genealogical research, and, combined with archival and reference research, could provide an excellent exercise in historical documentation.
- ♦ **Geology Curriculum.** As documented in the "Landscape Assessment" section of this Plan, West Cemetery contains several types of grave stone materials, including slate, marble, brownstone, and granite. The landscape provides an outdoor classroom for students of geology, learning the composition of stones, and how they perform as carved objects over years of outdoor exposure.
- ♦ **Art History Curriculum.** West Cemetery contains the craft of many stone carvers who worked in the Western Massachusetts area in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Because of this, opportunity exists to study the folk art of this period, as it appeared in stonework and funerary art.
- ♦ **Studio Art Curriculum.** For students engaged in the study of sculpture, the West Cemetery landscape could become a venue for both inspiration and exhibition. By staging temporary sculpture shows, students could learn how to site their work. Such a program would also foster greater public awareness of the Cemetery.



# WEST CEMETERY PRESERVED

The illustration at the left depicts West Cemetery after the eight treatment projects have come to fruition. A picket-style fence will enclose the entire landscape, with buffers of trees trimming all edges. Two entrances - the Burnham Gate off Triangle Street and Gaylord Gate off North Pleasant Street - will allow visitors access to the Cemetery. The African American burial area (lower right corner) and Town Tomb (center) will benefit from new plantings, seating and signs. An unobtrusive walk will allow pedestrians a shorter route, through the 19<sup>th</sup> century section, from the Burnham to the Gaylord Gates.

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**IMPLEMENTATION**

This final section of the Preservation Plan provides guidelines for bringing the recommendations to fruition. It includes landscape management procedures, cemetery management strategies, and potential sources for funding preservation activities. Its purpose is to provide the Town with a starting point for long term care and active use of West Cemetery.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Landscape management involves caring for the Cemetery's plants, roadways, paths, and decorative elements – monuments, markers, metalwork, and structures. The recommendations for treating the landscape, as outlined earlier in this Plan, were developed with the objective of minimizing long term maintenance. Therefore, the following landscape management tasks focus more on periodic inspection, rather than active, day-to-day intervention.

### Landscape Management

Plants at West Cemetery include evergreen and deciduous trees, herbaceous materials and turf. While the following recommended plant palettes will self-sustain, the plantings will require the most intensive care of all Cemetery features. The Town should implement the following maintenance procedures:

### Plants

- ♦ **Trees.** Trees at West Cemetery are well-tended by the Town tree warden, and this effort should continue. Two regular programs already in place include (1) pruning dead wood and (2) monitoring for disease. Fertilizing of ornamental trees to improve flowering is optional. In particular, the warden should inspect Hemlocks for infestations of woolly adelgid, which threaten the health of the Cemetery perimeter. The best protection against this insect is to diversify the cemetery edge, as described in the "Recommendations" section of the Plan.
- ♦ **Herbaceous Plants.** These plants include groundcovers and meadow material. For the most part, the palette recommended below will self-sustain. Meadow grasses and flowers require mowing once in late summer to encourage distribution of seeds and maintain an 18" height.
- ♦ **Turf.** Turf covers most of the Cemetery floor and will continue to do so. Mowing practices should include taking care around monuments, markers, and fencings not to mar surfaces. Fertilizing is optional. Irrigation is not recommended.

Historical records do not indicate the exact location and species of plant materials at West Cemetery, and therefore the Town cannot reconstruct original planting schemes. However, the following palettes offer a selection of plants appropriate to each section of the Cemetery. These will help augment the distinctive feel of each section by complementing plants already in place.

### Plant Palettes

**Older Section (1730-1870) (Trees)**

Acer saccharum	Sugar Maple
Aesculus hippocastanum	Horse Chestnut
Fagus sylvatica	European Beech
Fraxinus americana	White Ash
Picea abies	Norway Spruce
Pinus strobus	White Pine
Quercus velutina	Black Oak
Tilia americana	American Linden

**Newer Section (1870 +) (Trees)**

*Ornamental Trees*

Acer palmatum	Japanese Maple
Magnolia kobus	Kobus Magnolia
Oxydendrum arboreum	Sourwood

*Shade Trees*

Acer pseudoplatnus	Sycamore Maple
Aesculus x carnea	Red-flowering Chestnut
Castanea dentata	American Chestnut
Cercidiphyllum japonicum	Katsura tree
Cladrastis lutea	Yellow-Wood
Fagus sylvatica 'Pendula'	Weeping European Birch
Larix laricina	American Larch
Platanus occidentalis	Sycamore
Quercus alba	White Oak
Ulmus glabra 'Camperdownii'	Camperdown Elm
Zelkova serrata	Greybark Elm

*Evergreen Trees*

Chamaecyparis obtusa	Hinoki Falsecypress
Juniperus virginiana	Eastern Red Cedar
Picea abies	Norway Spruce
Picea glauca	American White Spruce
Pinus nigra	Austrian Pine
Pinus sylvestris	Scotch Pine
Pseudotsuga menziesii	Douglas Fir

**Cemetery Edge (Trees for diversifying the existing Hemlock hedges)**

*Evergreen Trees*

Picea abies	Norway Spruce
Picea glauca	American White Spruce
Pinus nigra	Austrian Pine
Pinus strobus	White Pine
Pinus sylvestris	Scotch Pine
Pseudotsuga menziesii	Douglas Fir



**African American Burial Site (Herbaceous Plants – Shade)**

Aegopodium podagraria	'Variegatum' Bishop's Weed
Arctostaphylos uva-ursi	Bearberry
Convallaria majalis	Lily-of-the-Valley
Cornus canadensis	Bunchberry
Epimedium grandiflorum	Barrenwort
Galium odorata	Sweet Woodruff
Mitchella repens	Partridge-berry
Muscari sp.	Grape Hyacinths
Narcissus poeticus	Poet's Narcissus
Osmunda regalis	Royal Fern
Parthenocissus quinquefolia	Virginia Creeper
Polygonatum multiflorum	Solomon's Seal
Vinca minor	Trailing Vinca

**1730 Knoll (Herbaceous Plants – Sun)**

Daucus carota	Queen Anne's Lace
Echinacea purpurea	Purple Coneflower
Galanthus plicatus	Snowdrops
Gentianna septemfida var. lagodechiana	Bluebells
Houstonia caerulea	Bluets
Lobularia maritima	Sweet Alyssum
Lupinus perennis	Wild Blue Lupine
Muscari sp.	Grape Hyacinths
Myosotis sylvatica	Forget-me-not
Narcissus poeticus	Poet's Narcissus
Phlox stolonifera	Creeping Phlox
Phlox subulata	Moss Phlox
Rudbeckia hirta	Black-eyes Susan
Sorghastum nutans	Indian Grass
Thymus serpyllum	Creeping Thyme

Specific recommendations for reconstructing roadways and paths appear in the "Recommendations" section of this Plan. While the Plan does not include specific construction details for these, its "schematic" details suggest durable, more permanent surfaces than what appear in the landscape today.

Despite the durability of these surfaces, however, the roadways and paths will wear over time, requiring repair. When making these repairs, the Town should refer to construction details designed for the surfaces, and replace what has worn accordingly.

Specific recommendations for the damaged monuments and markers in West Cemetery appear in Appendix A of this Plan. The proposed treatments are designed to stabilize the stones for many, many years. If further damage occurs, the Town should consult this Appendix. By studying the photographs and charts, the Town will likely find similar problems and appropriate treatment measures. If unfamiliar problems arise, the Town should consult a monument restoration professional.

**Roadways & Paths****Monuments & Markers**

### ***Metalwork***

Similar to the monuments and markers, the recommendations for metalwork treatment have been designed to stabilize the elements for many, many years. New materials and finishes introduced to replace those no longer extant will likely endure much longer than their 19<sup>th</sup> century counterparts. Cosmetic damage can be avoided if mowers are kept away from fencing and pipe rails. If damage does occur (either structural or cosmetic), the Town should consult a metals specialist before proceeding with repair.

### ***Structures***

Specific recommendations and treatment options for the Town Tomb and plot curbing appear in Appendix C of this Plan. These have been designed to stabilize the structures. While the Town should implement a regular schedule of structure inspection (particularly in the first few years after preservation/reconstruction), no further management should be necessary.

### ***Cemetery Management***

The Preservation Plan calls for many projects and programs to be implemented over time. While the Town has managed work on the landscape to date, implementing the plan will require a large commitment of time and expertise, taxing the Town's resources. The following measures can help the implementation process, by providing a management structure specific to West Cemetery.

### ***Friends' Group***

One way of managing the long-term preservation and interpretation of West Cemetery is to form a friends' group, or "Friends of West Cemetery." Incorporated as a 501 (c) (3), or non-profit corporation within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the organization could adopt the following four-fold mission:

- ♦ Advocate and promote West Cemetery to the general public as a rich historic resource in the Town of Amherst, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and United States of America;
- ♦ Educate the general public about West Cemetery, its history and resources, through tours, lectures, printed material, interpretive signs and other methods, as outlined in the "Recommendations" section of the Plan;
- ♦ Preserve West Cemetery through physical treatment of the landscape and its varied features, such as the Dickinson gravesite, African American burial area, and others; and
- ♦ Raise funds for West Cemetery through membership programs, annual appeals, bequests, grants, and other gifts from private and public sources, as identified below.

Amherst might also consider lumping the other Town cemeteries under this umbrella nonprofit organization. A "Friends of the Amherst Cemeteries" could further preservation and maintenance efforts at all the cemeteries, saving both time and financial resources.

One of the greatest values of a "Friends" group is to provide a vehicle for volunteer recruitment. Volunteers can play an active role in many preservation activities including fundraising, tour-guiding, gravestone preservation, some planting efforts, school programming and others. Once the "Friends" are established, the group can post recruitment notices in the library, Town Hall, colleges and universities, the Amherst Bulletin, and over cable television. Included in these notices should be the types of activities planned for the "Friends", as a means of further encouraging participation.

## **Volunteer Recruitment**

The following lists contain information about possible sources of funds for implementing the West Cemetery Preservation Plan. The Foundation Directory, Internet research, telephone inquiries and written materials provided specifics about each source. It is important to note that because funding interests, award amounts and deadlines can shift frequently, the Town should obtain up-to-date information from each source, prior to making an application.

## **Funding Resources**

The list contains two categories – public-sector funding and private support. Public sector programs are administered by federal, state, and local agencies, and are usually subject to annual budget scrutiny. The emphasis of such programs often shifts on a yearly basis, according to perceived public need. Private sources lie with foundations, corporations, and individual donors. When considering a public funding program or private foundation, the Town should confirm the funding priorities, dollar request limits, and application deadlines.

- ♦ **National Center for Preservation Technology & Training**, United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service. This arm of the National Park Service awards grants for information management, training and research on technical issues in preservation, with an emphasis on archeology, historic architecture, historic landscapes, objects and materials conservation, and interpretation. While grants may focus on a single site, the impact of the grant must reach a national audience. Awards are made annually. Contact: National Center for Preservation Technology & Training  
NSU, Box 5682  
Natchitoches, LA 71497  
318-357-6464  
[www.ncptt.nps.gov](http://www.ncptt.nps.gov)
- ♦ **Save Outdoor Sculpture! (SOS!)**, National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, and National Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Property. This public/private initiative aims to restore the nation's significant works of public sculpture. Grants are available for assessment, conservation treatment and maintenance training. Contact: National Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Property  
3299 K Street, NW, Suite 602  
Washington, DC 20007  
800-422-4612  
[www.heritagepreservation.org](http://www.heritagepreservation.org)

## **Public Sector Sources: Federal Programs**

- ♦ **National Endowment for the Arts.** The NEA provides support to individuals, nonprofit organizations and local governments for historic preservation through its Design Arts Program, where it promotes excellence in landscape architecture and community design. Awards are made annually. Contact:  
National Endowment for the Arts  
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20506  
202-682-5442  
[www.arts.endow.gov](http://www.arts.endow.gov)
  
- ♦ **National Endowment for the Humanities.** Through its Division of Preservation & Access, the NEH supports projects that preserve and increase public access to books, journals, maps, and other objects of material culture. Through its Division of Research, the Endowment supports research efforts in the humanities. Its Division of Education awards grants to educational institutions to strengthen study in the humanities. Deadlines for each division occur once per year. Contact:  
National Endowment for the Humanities  
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 10506  
202-606-8400  
[www.neh.gov](http://www.neh.gov)
  
- ♦ **Preservation Assistance Division, National Register of Historic Places, United States Department of the Interior.** Through its Historic Preservation Fund grants-in-aid program, this division of the National Register offers support for historic preservation treatment work. Contact:  
Preservation Assistance Division  
P.O. Box 37127, Mail Stop 424  
Washington, DC 20013-7127  
202-343-9575  
[www.cr.nps.gov/nr/nrhome](http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/nrhome)
  
- ♦ **National Trust for Historic Preservation.** The leading national advocacy organization for historic preservation, the Trust provides preservation-related funding through five programs. In particular, the Preservation Services Fund and Johanna Favrot Fund offer grants for professional services and education programs. Contact:  
National Trust for Historic Preservation  
1785 Massachusetts Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20036  
202-588-6000  
[www.nthp.org](http://www.nthp.org)  
or  
Northeast Regional Office  
Seven Faneuil Hall Marketplace  
Boston, MA 02109  
617-523-0885  
[nero@nthp.org](mailto:nero@nthp.org)



- ♦ **Massachusetts Foundation for Humanities.** The state program of the National Endowment for the Humanities, MFH supports public discussion groups, workshops, conferences, lecture series, radio programs, films, and video projects in the humanities. In particular, their "Special Places Program" helps community groups and cultural organizations develop programs focusing on significant public places. Awards are made on an ongoing basis. Contact: Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities  
One Woodbridge Street  
South Hadley, MA 01075  
413-534-6918  
[www.mfh.org](http://www.mfh.org)
- ♦ **Massachusetts Cultural Council.** MCC, the state arts agency of Massachusetts, provides grants to organizations in the arts, humanities, and interpretive sciences. Contact: Massachusetts Cultural Council  
120 Boylston Street  
Boston, MA 02116-4600  
617-727-3668  
[www.massculturalcouncil.org](http://www.massculturalcouncil.org)
- ♦ **Massachusetts Community Development Block Grant Program.** Aimed at communities with populations under 50,000, the Mass CDBG program supports neighborhood improvement projects and downtown and universal access projects. Contact: Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development  
100 Cambridge Street  
Boston, MA 02202  
877-275-3423  
[www.state.ma.us/dhcd](http://www.state.ma.us/dhcd)
- ♦ **Heritage Tree Care Grant Program,** Department of Environmental Management, Office of Resource Conservation. Supported by the federal government, the Heritage Tree Care program funds communities with advanced tree care programs for protection and enhancement of "heritage trees". Contact: Department of Environmental Management  
Office of Resource Conservation  
100 Cambridge Street, Room 1404  
Boston, MA 02202  
617-727-3160  
[www.magnet.state.ma.us/dem](http://www.magnet.state.ma.us/dem)

**Public Sector Sources:  
State Programs**

- ♦ **Historic Landscape Preservation Grant Program**, Department of Environmental Management, Office of Resource Conservation. The primary source of funding for this Preservation Plan, the Historic Landscape Preservation Grant Program supports preservation and restoration of historic landscapes listed or eligible for listing on the State or National Register of Historic Places. Contact:  
Department of Environmental Management  
Office of Resource Conservation  
100 Cambridge Street, Room 1404  
Boston, MA 02202  
617-727-3160  
[www.magnet.state.ma.us/dem](http://www.magnet.state.ma.us/dem)
- ♦ **MASS ReLeaf Grant Program**, Department of Environmental Management, Office of Resource Conservation. MassReLeaf provides funds for planting and care of public trees through partnerships between businesses, government, and nonprofit groups. Contact:  
Department of Environmental Management  
Office of Resource Conservation  
100 Cambridge Street, Room 1404  
Boston, MA 02202  
617-727-3160  
[www.magnet.state.ma.us/dem](http://www.magnet.state.ma.us/dem)
- ♦ **Urban Forest Planning and Education Grants**, Department of Environmental Management, Office of Resource Conservation. Funded by the USDA Forest Service, this program assists communities with long-term protection and management of trees. Contact:  
Department of Environmental Management  
Office of Resource Conservation  
100 Cambridge Street, Room 1404  
Boston, MA 02202  
617-727-3160  
[www.magnet.state.ma.us/dem](http://www.magnet.state.ma.us/dem)
- ♦ **Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund**, Massachusetts Historical Commission. The Preservation Projects Fund supports the preservation of properties, landscapes, and sites listed or eligible for listing on the State Register of Historic Places. Contact:  
Massachusetts Historical Commission  
220 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, MA 02125-3314  
617-727-5128  
[www.state.ma.us/sec/mhc/](http://www.state.ma.us/sec/mhc/)
- ♦ **Survey & Planning Grants Program**, Massachusetts Historical Commission. This program supports a variety of preservation-related activities including preservation planning and education. Contact:  
Massachusetts Historical Commission  
220 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, MA 02125-3314  
617-727-5128  
[www.state.ma.us/sec/mhc/](http://www.state.ma.us/sec/mhc/)

- ♦ **Amherst Cultural Council.** This re-granting program of the Massachusetts Cultural Council provides funds for arts, humanities, and applied science programs to Amherst individuals and organizations. Contact:  
Massachusetts Cultural Council  
120 Boylston Street  
Boston, MA 02116-4600  
617-727-3668  
[www.massculturalcouncil.org](http://www.massculturalcouncil.org)

**Public Sector Sources:  
Local Programs**

- ♦ **Furthermore, The J.M. Kaplan Fund.** Furthermore provides funding for printed materials in the areas of design, landscape, parks, cultural history, preservation of historic and community resources in the form of books, catalogues, guides, pamphlets and maps. Awards are made twice yearly. Contact:  
Furthermore  
P.O. Box 667  
Hudson, NY 12534  
518-828-8900

**Private Sources:  
Foundations**

- ♦ **Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts.** This foundation supports a range of activities including historic preservation, arts and cultural programs, and adult and continuing education. Grants are limited to Western Massachusetts organizations (with an emphasis on Hampden County and Springfield). Contact:  
Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts  
1500 Main Street, Suite 1800  
P.O. Box 15769  
Springfield, MA 01115  
413-732-2858
- ♦ **The Fred Harris Daniels Foundation, Inc.** While most of its giving occurs within the Worcester area, the Daniels Foundation supports some activity elsewhere in Massachusetts. Fields of interest include historic preservation and education, with funding provided for renovation and program development. Contact:  
The Fred Harris Daniels Foundation, Inc.  
c/o Bank of Boston-Worcester-The Private Bank  
100 Front Street  
Worcester, MA 01608  
617-434-1670
- ♦ **Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati.** This foundation gives to organizations devoted to American history and genealogy for cultural programming and youth development. Grants are made to pre-selected organizations (no applications accepted). Contact:  
Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati  
c/o Welch & Forbes  
45 School Street  
Boston, MA 02108  
617-523-1635



*Corporate & Individual  
Support*

- ♦ *The Ellis L. Phillips Foundation.* This foundation supports institutions across northern New England in the area of rural historic preservation (among many others). It funding is limited to organizations (no individuals) and is targeted at program development.  
Contact:  
The Ellis L. Phillips Foundation  
29 Commonwealth Avenue  
Boston, MA 02116  
617-424-7607
- ♦ *The Vingo III Trust.* With giving limited primarily to Massachusetts, the Vingo III Trust supports historic preservation and historical societies as well as higher education and education. Contact:  
The Vingo III Trust  
c/o BankBoston  
P.O. Box 1861  
Boston, MA 02105

Some of the most significant contributions can come from local private sources – corporations and individuals. While some corporations have established “foundations”, many will offer support in response to a direct solicitation. Similarly, individuals can contribute through established giving programs (such as annual appeals and membership drives), through volunteer contributions or via a donations box at the Cemetery entrance.

The best way to secure such support is through a formal “Friends” group (see “Management”, above). Such an organization can obtain nonprofit status (501(c)(3)) and corporations and individuals can then make tax-deductible contributions to the Friends (rather than to the Town of Amherst).